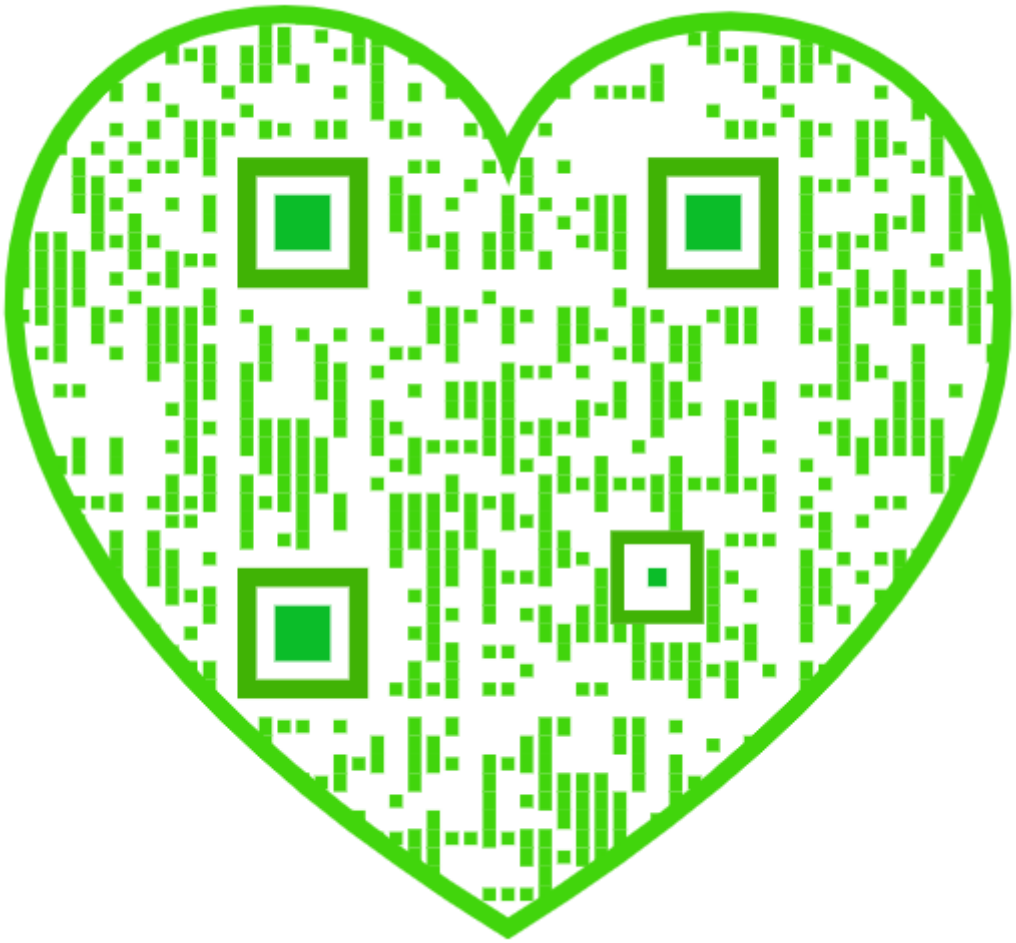

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CONTAINING

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TO MAKE ALL WHO MAY FEEL DISPOSED TO TRY THEIR SKILL
MASTERS OF THE ART.

WITH A MINUTE DESCRIPTION OF

TACKLE, BAITS, TIMES, SEASONS,

Fish, and the method of Cooking them,

AND ALL

THE PLACES FOR ANGLING WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF LONDON.

THE WHOLE FORMING A COMPENDIOUS MANUAL
FOR EVERY ANGLER.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, A GRAPHIC AND LAUGHABLE STORY, ENTITLED,

"THE THREE JOLLY ANGLERS."

BY THE REV. JAMES MARTIN.

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TO

"The united Sons of Walton and Cotton,"

AND ALL OTHER

LOVERS OF THE PISCATORY ART,

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND

THE AUTHOR.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION i

CHAPTER I.

ROACH FISHING—The Rod—The Line—The Hook—The Float—The Depth—The Places to fish for Roach—The Times to fish for Roach—The Way to kill Roach—The Way to keep Roach when you have caught them—The Way to clean them—The Way to cook them—The Way to eat them—Song: The Roach of the Lea . . 5

CHAPTER II.

JACK FISHING—The Rod—The Line and Winch—The Floats, Leads and Hooks—Times to fish for Jack—Places in which to take Jack—The Way to kill Jack—Song: The Jack and Pike 30

CHAPTER III.

BARBEL FISHING—The Rod—The Line—The Float—The Hook—The Baits—The Ground-baits—Places and Times to fish for Barbel—The Way to kill Barbel—Song: The Barbel 43

CHAPTER IV.

ROACH AND DACE FISHING—General Instruction—Song: The young Angler 59

CHAPTER V.

GUDGEON FISHING—General Instruction—Song: The Gudgeon 65

CHAPTER VI.

PAGE

CHUB FISHING—General Instruction—Song: The Chub. 69

CHAPTER VII.

PERCH FISHING—General Instruction—Song: The Perch, and his Fate 76

CHAPTER VIII.

EELS, CARP, TENCH, BREAM,—Four Ways to catch Eels —The Way to take Carp—Tench, their Habits, &c. . 83

CHAPTER IX.

THE RIVER LEA, AND ITS FISHERIES 90

CHAPTER X.

THE RIVER THAMES, AND ITS FISHERIES . . . 97

CHAPTER XI.

THE DOCKS AND OTHER PLACES ROUND LONDON . . 103

CHAPTER XII.

TROUT FISHING 113

CHAPTER XIII.

ANGLING—General Remarks on Anglers and Angling . 126

THE THREE JOLLY ANGLERS 133

STANZAS TO THE LADIES ON ANGLING. . . . 189

INTRODUCTION.

SOME of our friends into whose hands this book may fall may be ready to say—"Why write another Angler's Guide, when there are a number in print already?" Our answer is, that we have been requested by some old friends to do so, who remember the little work we wrote some twenty years back, entitled A Guide to the White House Water. These friends think that there is not only plenty of room for a new work on Angling, but a want of one, and such an one as we trust this will be found to be, really useful and interesting. It is a fact, that must be known to many, that there are a

number of works that profess to give instruction in various arts that are very deficient; and persons who are really novices may read through them, and know very little more than they did before they began. Such will not, we presume, be the case with this.

It must be known also, that there are numbers of Anglers who very seldom catch any fish. The Author could give many rather laughable instances; one only must suffice. He had been, upon one occasion, fishing for roach in the West India Dock, and on leaving was overtaken by a party who had been fishing there too. They asked him if he had had any sport; he said, Yes, and held up his handkerchief, in which his bag of fish was tied. One of the party just took it from his hand to feel its weight, and holding it up in the air, said to one of his companions: "Law, Joe, look here! and we have been at

it all day!" They were surprised and vexed because there were not a dozen fish among them. This at once showed that there was a great deficiency somewhere, as the same means were in their power, and they had been fishing in the same place and at the same time.

It is to obviate such disappointments that the following pages are written, and they will, if they be well perused and acted upon. Angling, after all the jeers that may be thrown at it, is a healthful and innocent recreation; and such recreations are really necessary, both for body and mind. The Author has spent in it many pleasant hours, from his earliest childhood, and flatters himself, that if fish are to be taken, he can take them, and the experience he has acquired he submits to his angling friends without any reserve. He has, indeed, often made the water-side a place for meditation, and instead of shutting himself in his study

for that purpose, has composed beside the silvery stream a good part of many works of a very different character from the present. He feels persuaded, therefore, that anglers may become more wise and healthy during their piscatory excursions, and wishes them every happiness and success.

THE

ANGLER'S GUIDE.

CHAPTER I.

ROACH FISHING—THE ROD—THE LINE—THE HOOK—THE FLOAT—THE DEPTH—THE PLACES TO FISH FOR ROACH—THE TIMES TO FISH FOR ROACH—THE WAY TO KILL ROACH—THE WAY TO KEEP ROACH WHEN YOU HAVE CAUGHT THEM—THE WAY TO CLEAN THEM—THE WAY TO COOK THEM—THE WAY TO EAT THEM—SONG—THE ROACH OF THE LEA.

MANY persons prefer roach fishing to any other, therefore we speak of it first. And it certainly does require a good deal of adaptation, care, and skill to be a good roach angler.

THE ROD.

To fish for roach well, you should have a rod that is made expressly for the purpose, and it should be kept for roach and other light fishing only. It should be made of cane, or very light bamboo, and not more than fourteen feet long, the whole weighing not many ounces.

When put together it should be nearly as straight as one joint, and so constructed that it shall be very stiff, and yet very pliable. The superiority of such a rod over one of another kind will be seen in many respects. First, it will be very light in the hand, and with it you will be able to strike your fish with the greatest quickness and precision. Secondly, when you strike, it will not break your hair line, as a heavy one would be likely to do. And, thirdly, when you have hooked your fish, it will so give to his pulling that your line will not break, though it should be a roach of the greatest weight they run.

THE LINE.

Your line should always be single hair, of sorrel or white colour, (we prefer the former,) and should be very fine at the bottom; especially the piece on which the hook is tied, which should be also perfectly straight, round, and transparent, so that the water shall not bead on it, for if it do the fish will not touch it. The top piece, on which is your float, should be the coarsest and strongest, so that if you break you may not lose your float, and also to

give your line a proper throw, and play in the water. Upon the top of your line should be looped about eight inches of double thread, with which to loop it to your rod. By adopting this plan you will be able to throw your line out and to strike your fish much better than you would if your hair were looped to your rod. Let the shots on your line be small and close together, about eighteen inches from the hook, with only one about six inches from the hook, which will make it hang in proper trim. Gut is now made expressly for roach fishing, as fine and as round as hair; but we still give the preference to hair, notwithstanding; still you might use such gut for very heavy roach.

THE HOOK.

You must never use the common Kirby hooks for roach fishing, for you may be sure that you will not catch many with them; they are too thick and clumsy, and have too much show about them. It must be the hook made expressly for roach, which is of a very fine wire, and lays hold more quickly and surely, and if tied on neatly is scarcely seen at all. And be

sure they are not too long in the shank, for if they are it is a great objection; yet they must not be too short, for in that case they will not hold the fish after you have hooked it. Never use, even of this kind of hook, too large a size, in particular if the water be fine, for we have found that they always take the small one more freely. No. 11 is, in our opinion, the best, unless they happen to be very strong on the feed, or it is almost dark. If you just prick your fish and lose them, you may be sure that your hook is blunt, in which case you should have a small piece of black stone always with you, and with it the point of your hook should be sharpened, or a fresh one put on. Sometimes you will find that your hook gets turned on the hair and hangs very improperly, the hair being on the outside of the shank, or on the side of it, instead of being inside. When it is so, always put on a fresh one, or you will lose above half the fish you hook before you bring them to hand, for a hook hanging thus will not hold the fish securely.

THE FLOAT.

The best floats for roach fishing are those made of swans' quills, which are now manu-

factured in great perfection. The size of your float should vary according to the depth of the water in which you are fishing. If the water be ten or twelve feet deep you will require a float that takes a good number of shots, or your bait will be too long in sinking to the bottom. And, beside this, the longer your line is, the more shots are necessary to keep it in proper trim. And the water being deep, the large float will not be objectionable at the top of the water. But never use a large float and a great number of shots in four or five feet of water, for if you do you will be sure not to take many roach: I have seen scores of instances of it. I always use a float as small as I can conveniently, and I always find that it answers best; and it must be seen at a glance that it must be so, because the appearances in the water are the finer. Let your float be so shotted that, when it is in the water, only about a quarter of an inch is seen, for if there be much of it out of the water you will not be able to see the bite so well. I always use a float that is rather thick at the top, and have my cap to fit about three-eighths of an inch from the tip, so that when it is in the water the cap just catches the water. I always

bind a little waxed silk on my cap also, to make it thick, which causes it to rest on the water more steadily. By adopting these methods, you will be able to see the finest bite possible, which is very important in roach fishing.

THE BAIT.

Roach at different seasons of the year, and in different waters, will take various kinds of baits—worms, gentles, grubs, blood-worms, may all be used, if anglers feel disposed to use them, but for our own part we never use anything but paste. In the Lea, in the spring, sometimes blood-worms may be used with advantage, and in the summer, gentles in the docks, but, even then, we always use paste in preference. We should not, indeed, consider that we were roach fishing if we were not using paste. To make it really good, the bread must be the best, about one day old, not more, nor less; be particular in that respect, for if it be too new your paste will be too stickey, and not white, and if it be too stale, it will be too loose to hold on the hook. When at the water-side, and not till then, for it spoils in a short time, take a piece out of

the middle of the loaf in a square shape, about as big as a large walnut, dip it into the water, and take it out again as quickly as possible, and as quickly squeeze all the water out of it, or it will become too wet and never mix well. Having done that, put it into the palm of your left hand, and work it up with the thumb and finger of your right, until it is quite solid, smooth, and white; it will then be fit for the hook, and should be kept from the action of the air, for that turns its colour; and to prevent that, we always put it into a small clean piece of white rag, and put it into the left-hand waistcoat pocket, from whence we take it piece by piece as we want it. If you fish some hours, and you find that it has become discoloured, make a fresh piece by all means, or your finny company will fall out with you. Be sure that your hands are perfectly clean when you make it, or it will all be spoiled. The piece you put on the hook should be about the size of a white pea, and as round, and should be so placed on the hook that the point should be just at the outside of the round; be particular in that, or you will run a chance of not hooking your fish, especially if your paste be too stiff.

GROUND-BAIT.

The best ground-bait for roach is bread and bran. Take about a pound of bread of any kind, and soak it in water till it is quite soft, then put it into a bag and squeeze all the water from it, then put into the bag with it about a quart of bran, and work it together till it comes to a stiff paste. This you may do at home, if you please, and take it all ready with you to the water. When baiting the ground with it, throw it in in pieces about the size of a walnut, one now and then. If the water be deep, press each piece into the form of a cup, or put into it a small stone, so that it may sink quickly into the place where you wish it to fall; always bearing in mind, that ground-bait, falling into an improper place, is very detrimental to your sport, seeing that it coaxes the fish away from you. Many anglers are not half particular enough in this respect. Your baited hook should always be exactly in the place where the ground-bait is. If the water is still and shallow, the smaller your pieces are the better. If the fish are feeding well, do not throw in any bait, but, as you

would do in more important circumstances, "leave well alone." I have sometimes found that in still waters, a little bread, chewed very fine, and thrown in, is a very enticing ground-bait.

THE DEPTH.

The general rule is, to let the bait just touch the ground; but we have frequently found that they will take it, at certain times, much better two or three inches above it, though at others, they will not touch it unless it be on the ground. You must, therefore, use your own judgment according to the feeding of the fish, for they do not feed in all waters, places, and times alike. Generally, however, you take the largest fish with the bait on the bottom.

It is a good plan in still waters, especially when they are very fine on the feed, to raise your float now and then, four or five inches out of the water, several times, and then let it settle, for if anything will tempt them to take the bait it is that manœuvre. We have frequently been fishing for them when we could not get a fish in any other way; they see the bait moving and are excited to take it.

THE PLACES TO FISH FOR ROACH.

Roach are fond of a harbour, both in the water and out of it, or over it. An overhanging tree, piles of an old bridge, or a corner where there are a good many sedges and rushes, are all good places, if the water be still and deep. In all subscription waters such places are well known and visited, but in any other, they are the places to fish for roach. And always give the preference to a place where the ground is sandy, as they generally are found in such places, in particular in the spring of the year, when they are about spawning. In no case fish for roach where the water runs swiftly. A place near a very deep hole is always very likely, as they frequently rise from the hole to feed in the more shallow water. A place of this kind is always the best for winter fishing.

THE TIMES TO FISH FOR ROACH.

Roach will feed, more or less, the whole of the year round, but the best times are in the spring and fall in rivers, and in the summer in docks, and all standing waters. If the

weather be warm, you may sometimes take them in the docks till October, I mean in the deep docks. But you will never take them there in the first of the season, until the water has become warm by the sun, &c. In the more shallow docks, such as the timber, &c., they will feed earlier and later. Upon one occasion in the West India Timber Dock, I took a handsome dish only four days before Christmas. In the Lea, Thames, and other rivers, they will feed in the middle of warm days all through the winter, if the water be in good condition, that is, not too much coloured. A good deal depends on the wind and weather at all times of the year. If the day be bright and fine, and the wind in the north, or east, you will be sure to have very little sport, or if the day be raw and cold, you will not take many. A south, south-east, or south-west wind is the best all the year round, and if the water be in order, you will be almost sure of sport when either of those winds blow. A lowering day, with a gentle breeze and a little soft rain, is always the best for roach fishing.

THE WAY TO KILL ROACH.

Supposing that you have obtained the tackle I have described, and have made the bait, you go to the place where you intend to fish. Don't stand over it and look into it, to see if you can see any fish, neither let any other person do so, if you can help it; for very often, by acting thus imprudently, especially if the bank be high and the water clear, you will drive all the roach out of the swim, and it may be a considerable time before you entice them back again. Having pitched upon your place, go to it cautiously and quietly, and immediately take your seat, and if the ground be damp, take care to have a piece of cork or board to sit on. Being seated, put your rod together, beginning with the top joints; then loop on your line, and hook on your plummet, and try the depth, and be sure you do it as gently as possible. Your line must be just so long as to allow about fifteen inches between the rod and the float. If, therefore, you find it too long, you must shorten it, and if too short, you must lengthen it, and in no case fish with it in

any other form and think it will do, because it will not. Having your line the exact length, and your float in the exact place, keep your plummet on and let your line soak in the water while you make your bait as before directed; this is a good plan, because a hair line unsoaked is very tender. Your bait being well made, take off your plummet, bait your hook and cast in, taking particular notice which way your float rides in the water, and then throw in your ground bait according to your best judgment. Some will throw a lot of ground bait in first, and then when they begin to fish, find that they cannot keep the float for a second in the place where it is. Let all your movements be gentle, neat, and clever, bearing in mind, that making no disturbance in the water, or about the water, and very fine tackle, are the most essential things. In fact, neatness is every thing in fishing, especially for roach. The means employed must be of a gentle, and the tackle of an almost unperceived nature, and then you will catch them, but not under other circumstances. A clumsy angler, with a heavy rod, a coarse line and hook, a large float, a good parcel of large shots, and a bait nearly

as large as the top of your finger, will drive all the roach away from him, just as a large dog drives a flock of sheep, notwithstanding the very great desire he may have to catch some of them! If the fish are on the feed, and your tackle is rightly adjusted, you will have a bite very soon after you begin to fish. Strike the moment you see your float affected, letting the movement be made with the hand only, from the wrist, not from the arm, and turning the point of your rod upwards. Don't wait until you think the fish has swallowed the bait, because as soon as he finds it is attached to something, he will blow it out of his mouth, unless he be very hungry, which is not often the case; and remembering, that your float cannot be affected by him, unless he has your bait between his lips. Do not forget also, that the largest fish generally bite in the most cautious manner. As soon as you have hooked a fish, little or big, keep a tight line on him, your rod being raised directly over him. If he be large and pull well, don't be afraid of him, for if you keep your rod up over him, he must pull tremendously to break you, though your tackle be of such a delicate order. Your hair when

well soaked is elastic, and your rod is very pliable, and if your judgment be good, all his endeavours to get away will be unavailing. The grand thing, especially in a young angler, is, not to be in too great a hurry. Hundreds of good fish have been lost for want of a little time and patience. Keep your rod over him until he is quite still, and if you do not use a landing-net, lift him out of the water as gently as you possibly can, with the rod in your right hand, letting him hang his whole weight. Then very cautiously swing him to your left hand, and as cautiously get him within your grasp and hold him so fast that that he shall not stir while you take the hook out of his mouth. All this care is really necessary, for if a fish of only four or five ounces, and you pull him out quickly and let him flounder about in your lap, or on the ground, or any where else, it is ten to one that your hair gets broken long before you get the hook out. We have seen it done many, many times. If your fish is above four or five ounces, it is always best to use your landing-net. Never at any time attempt to lay hold of a fish while it is in the water, neither suffer any other person to do so for you; for

in that case you will be pretty sure to lose your fish, and have your line broken into the bargain.

Always keep your seat while you are killing and landing your fish, unless it be upon any intricate occasion, and you are obliged to get up; for rising up suddenly and moving about your swim, if the water be clear, will drive all the fish clean out of it, and you may have to wait no little time until they come back again.

THE WAY TO KEEP ROACH WHEN YOU HAVE CAUGHT THEM.

We have often felt surprised and vexed at the way in which some anglers act with their fish after they have caught them. Frequently have we seen a number of them scattered here and there on the grass behind them, drying in the wind and sun, until they are curled up like so many chips, and are good for nothing. Such conduct we consider both foolish and wasteful; and as we think that some may act thus for want of thought, or knowledge, we shall just give them a word of advice on the subject. Beside your basket you should always have a coarse linen bag, large enough to hold

a good number of roach; as soon as you catch the first one, dip your bag in the water, soaking it through, and then squeezing all the water out of it; put your fish into it, and put both into the shade, away from sun and wind, either in your basket, the sedges, or any other convenient place; and as you catch every fish, so put it into the bag, and the bag again into the cool place. By adopting this method your fish will look as handsome eight or ten hours after they are caught as when they first came out of the water. Some persons keep them in a live-net in the water, but it is not a good plan, for the fish pine, and often die in the net, and are completely spoiled. The grand point is to keep them cold and damp. If they dry in the sun or wind, the scales will never come off them, and with them on they are utterly useless. Remember that if you do not value the fish after you have caught them, there are thousands of persons who would. We have very frequently sent a handsome dish to our relations, friends, or neighbours, and they have always been very pleased with them; but they would not have been if they had not been brought home in a proper condition.

THE WAY TO CLEAN THEM.

Roach, being not an every-day sort of fish, some servants do not know how to clean them in a proper manner, and if they are not cleaned properly they are of. no use for the table. We have seen a great mess made with them in the kitchen, and the fish spoiled after all. To prevent this, adopt the following simple method:—Having turned the fish out of the bag, lay them in a pile on the board, their tails toward you, and taking them one by one, with the bluntest knife you have scrape off the scales, beginning from the tail, and pressing it fast on the board with the fingers of your left hand. Be sure you get every one of the scales off, for one only is very disagreeable while eating them. As you scrape them lay them aside, one by one, until the whole are finished. Then wipe your knife quite clean and put it away. Having done that, take an old pair of scissors and cut them open from the vent up to the head, laying them as you do them in a pile until they are all done. Then wipe your scissors clean and put them away. Then take out the inside of

them, putting them as you do them again into a pile. That being done, get a pan of water and wash them in it, taking them one by one from the board, and as you wash them put them into a cullender to drain. Be particular in this respect, for if they be all tumbled into the water together, and are in it only a few minutes, they will all be spoiled; and this is the case with all fresh-water fish. As soon as they are all washed and in the cullender, take a cloth and wipe them, one by one, as dry as possible, and put them into a dish, in which, dredge them well with flour, and they will then be ready for cooking. Take the insides and scales from the board and throw them in the dust bin, wash your board clean and throw away your water, and your kitchen will be as clean as before you commenced the operation. We are aware that some may feel disposed to smile at this piece of domestic advice, but we are convinced of its utility in many cases, and any angler can refer his servant to the book, or give her the lesson in five minutes. And we are quite sure that if these instructions be acted upon, this line of conduct will be found superior to any other that can be adopted. We know by experience, that it is next to

impossible for any servant to clean a dish of roach, properly, and in any other way.

THE WAY TO COOK THEM.

There are several ways in which roach may be cooked; they may be boiled, or stewed in vinegar, or baked like any other fish; but as we consider that frying them is by far the best method, we shall just throw out a word respecting it, knowing that there are many servants quite as deficient in the art of cooking them as in cleaning them. Let then the following plan be adopted. Put your pan on the fire and make it warm, then wipe it well with your cloth, and be quite sure that it is all over as smooth as possible, for if it be not, the fish while frying will stick to it, and having begun to stick, will keep on sticking, until it will be such a sticky affair, that all your roach will be spoiled and be much more fit to put down to the cat than to bring to the table. If your pan be not quite smooth, make it so by rubbing it with sand or ashes. It being quite smooth and clean, put it on the fire, which should not be too fierce, and put into it at least five

or six ounces of lard, or, if you use salad oil, a cupful. It is a very bad plan to put small quantities of fat in the pan, and then keep on adding to it, for in that case it keeps burning away and the fish are all spoiled; while if there be a good quantity, it does not waste, and at the same time it rises high enough to penetrate into the flesh of the fish. Your largest fish should always be cooked first, while there is the most fat in the pan. And bear in mind also, that in proportion to the size of the fish you are going to cook, so should be the quantity of fat, in order that it may rise to the thickness of the side of the fish; it need not be wasted after you have cooked your fish, but may be always put away for the next cooking.

Having put your fat in the pan, let it be on the fire until it boils, for if you do not, they will stick in spite of you; then put in your fish, letting their heads be towards the back of the stove and placing the largest in the middle of the pan. Let them fry till their eyes begin to turn white, then turn them over with a knife and let them fry not quite so long as they did before you turned them. Those in the middle of the pan will

generally be done first, especially if they be all of one size, and if any of those that have been on the sides are not quite done, bring them into the middle of the pan for a little time, to finish them off, before you put any fresh ones in. As they are done, put them on a strainer, and serve them up with brown sauce, melted butter, or any other sauce that may be preferred.

THE WAY TO EAT THEM.

There are many persons who are quite as ignorant of the right way to eat roach, as they are of the right way to catch, clean and cook them; they may understand the anatomy of a large cod or salmon weighing twenty pounds, but that of a roach is by far too intricate for them; therefore, for their instruction, and to make our chapter on Roach complete, we shall just give one word of advice. Having a roach on your plate, first pull out gently all the fins and put them aside; then put your knife into the middle of the side of the fish, and turn off the flesh, taking care that none of the bones come with it; if they are well cooked, they will

not, and the flesh you turn off will be fit to eat without any fear of bones. Having eaten one side, turn the fish over, and take off the flesh of the remaining side in the same way. Never let the sauce be poured over your fish, but keep it on the side of your plate, or you will not be able to see the bones, and to dissect them properly. If any be left, save them for breakfast, and you will find them very good cold.

To conclude, we will only add, let roach be thus caught, kept, cleaned, cooked and eaten, and depend upon it the opinion of many who sneer at them will be quite altered, if they should have the opportunity of partaking of any. And we do think, after all, that it is more rational and proper for anglers to take care of their fish, and have pleasure in partaking of them with their families, than to throw them about and waste them, or, as we have said, give them away to to their friends. There is nothing to be ashamed of, either in angling, or in having the fish, or in eating them. Angling, as hinted, is a healthful recreation, and eating the fish caught is the fruits of it. And we know the wise man says, "The slothful

man roasteth not that which he took in hunting." Anglers may be laughed at as they pass along, by those who may be going to a gambling-house or one of ill fame; but let such persons laugh, and let them go;—they will have their sport, and the angler will have his, but who will have the greatest peace of mind at night, and sleep the soundest? And who will feel the strongest the next morning, and have his head the clearest for business? I hope I have many angling friends who can answer these interrogations with the greatest confidence and satisfaction. In fact, I know I have, and I congratulate them on their happy choice, and wish them every pleasure while engaged in fishing for roach. I shall now only just give a little ditty to please my young friends, and with roach I have done. And it must be in praise of the roach, in my favourite river, the Lea.

THE ROACH OF THE LEA.

The Roach of the Lea
Are the finest you see
In the whole of fair England's bright rivers,
And so game and so strong,
That to play with them wrong,
They will shatter your tackle to shivers.

And Roach of the Lea
Are as sly as can be,
And unless you are skill'd in the science,
On a famous day's sport,
Or a basket-full caught,
You can't place the least shade of reliance.

And Roach of the Lea
Are so pamper'd, you see,
That though often the angler supposes
His bait is so good
They will prize it as food,
They will oft at it turn up their noses.

For Roach of the Lea
Then, an angler must be,
To encounter their whimseys, most able,
Or their tails they will wag,
While they leer at his bag,
And they'll ne'er be "done brown" on his table.

CHAPTER II.

JACK FISHING—THE ROD—THE LINE AND WINCH—THE FLOATS, LEADS AND HOOKS—TIMES TO FISH FOR JACK—PLACES IN WHICH TO TAKE JACK—THE WAY TO KILL JACK—SONG, THE JACK AND PIKE.

WE speak of Jack fishing, next to roach, because we consider it next in importance, many persons seldom angling for any other fish except roach and jack.

THE ROD.

The best rod for jack fishing is made of bamboo, and it must be strong and stiff, about twelve feet in length, with large rings standing up on it, and that on the top joint turned down a little to meet them, so that there shall be no impediment to the running of the line, for if there be any, the jack will feel it, and will be very likely to drop the bait. Some anglers use rods that are not so well adapted, but they seldom succeed so

well with them. Trolling rods in former times were made with a small pulley at the top, to give the line every facility in its movements.

THE LINE AND WINCH.

The line for jack fishing should be made of plaited silk, and should be thirty or forty yards in length, or longer, according to the water you fish in. If in a river, thirty or forty yards will be sufficient; but if in a large pond, or reservoir, such as the New River, &c. you will require a greater length, for the jack will sometimes run a long way into the middle of the water, and you must have enough to let him run without stopping him. Your winch must be in size proportioned to the quantity of line upon it, and should be a multiplying one, which winds in the line much quicker than those of the common order. Let your line be fine, for with care you may kill a fish of any weight without having your line thick and clumsy, which shows very much in the water. Never use a twisted line of any kind, for though it may look very fair, and you may think it will do very nicely, it will hamper you sadly all the while you are fishing with it,

by twisting and tangling in all manner of ways; it is made with a twist, and twist it will, in spite of all your endeavours to keep it straight.

THE FLOATS, LEADS AND HOOKS.

For jack fishing, floats are only used in live-baiting, and they are made of cork, with a hole through the middle, and a plug of wood to fasten them on the line. They should not be too large, for when the fish takes the float down and runs away with it, it is very apt to catch against a weed or anything else in the water, which will often cause him to drop the bait. The smaller the float, therefore, the better. When we are live-baiting in rivers, we generally use two, one to ride on the water above our bait, and another to follow it, at a distance of five or six feet, according to the depth of the water. By adopting this plan, as soon as the jack pulls down the first float, the other keeps still on the top of the water, and by it we see where the jack is running, and if it be into a dangerous place, it is better to stop him and chance hooking him, rather than run the risk of losing our tackle. And beside this, the

second float keeps the line from sinking into the water near the bait, which is frequently the case if you are a long way out. The lead you use to sink the bait is called a bead, being made like one, and should not be larger than a pea, being threaded on your line so as to fall on the knot made to fasten on your hook. The hooks for jack-fishing are of various kinds, and you may see and obtain a very good assortment at any of the respectable tackle-shops in London; but we shall only speak of two or three kinds, which are the most common and decidedly the most useful.

Those used for live-baiting are of two kinds, the single and the double; the single hook is used in two ways; one is, to hook with it the bait just below the back fin, and the other way is, to hook with it the bait through both the upper and the under lip. This is called the live-bait-snap, because you strike at the jack as soon as he begins to run away with your float. If you hit him, you hit him, and if you miss him, you miss him. It is, not, however, in our opinion, such a sportsmanlike manner of live-baiting as that with the double hook; there is not excitement enough about it, neither are you so sure of

your fish. To use the double hook, you must enter your baiting-needle just under the skin of your bait, beginning near the side fin, and bringing it out in the middle of the back, or dorsal fin, and having the gimp of your hook looped on it, draw it through until the hook is fixed in the side of the bait, with the points outwards. Do it quickly and carefully, for of all things we do in angling, we love that operation the least! When you live-bait in this way, you must not strike as soon as the jack runs off with the bait, but let him go with it wherever he likes, giving him a quarter of an hour to pouch it. When you fish for jack in this way, never let your double hook be too large, for it stands out on the side of the bait, and is a great objection, seeing that the jack always seizes it across, and has to turn it in his mouth before he pouches. And there is no necessity at all to have them large, as the smallest size sold is quite large enough to hold the largest fish you may take, for when once fastened in the pouch, it will never come out until it is pulled back. The next particular hook used is the gorge, which is made expressly for the dead bait, or trolling. You should have several of them, and always one

that is suitable to the size of the fish you bait with. In no case have your hook too large for the fish you put on it. The way to bait it is, to put your baiting-needle into the fish's mouth, and forcing it up the middle of the fish, bring it out at the tail. Then looping on your gorge-hook, draw it with your needle straight through the fish, turning the points of the hook upwards towards the eyes of the fish. Then, with a pair of scissors, cut off all the fins of the fish, with the exception of one on the side, which will help to turn the bait in the water. Having done this, tie the tail of the fish fast to the wire with a piece of thread, and having cut the ends off, cut off also the tip of the tail of the fish, so that as you draw it in the water, it shall not stick against the weeds, &c.; your hook and bait will then be ready to fasten on your line. It should not be tied on, but hooked on a swivel, tied to the end of your line, which will permit your bait to spin in the water as you draw it through. All hooks for jack-fishing are tied on gimp, to prevent the jack from biting them in half with their sharp and merciless teeth. But be sure your gimp is fine, for when it is not, it is in my opinion, a great objection, especially if the water be

clear, and the finest made, with care, will hold a fish of any weight.

TIMES TO FISH FOR JACK.

Jack-fishing begins, in most waters, on the first of August, and is continued until the beginning of March. All through this time they are in season, while during the rest of the year they are lank and thin. They spawn in March, unless the season is very backward, and when that is the case, anglers are allowed, in some waters, to fish for them all through that month. October and February we consider the best months, though we have taken very good fish during all the others; but it is in a great measure according to the weather and the water. During very cold, foggy, still days, they will not feed much, though you may get a fish now and then. The best time is, when the wind is blowing from the south-west, or any of the points near it. If it be blowing a good stiff gale, trolling with the dead bait is to be preferred, but if the day be fine, and the breeze gentle, live-baiting will be found the most killing. Very frequently during the jack-fishing season, the water is very thick, in consequence of heavy rains, floods, &c., and

during such times, it is of not much use to fish for them; but after the water has become fine, then is the time for the jack-fisher to try his skill, for the jack have been on short allowance during the thick water, not having been able to see the fish around them, they are, therefore, hungry, and will take the bait freely.

PLACES IN WHICH TO TAKE JACK.

Some persons will spend a good deal of time in roving about a water, and fishing in places where they are not at all likely to find a jack either little or big, and will even pass by a most likely place. Always bear in mind, that in rivers, jack are fond of the stillest places; corners, bends, and parts where there are a great many sedges, &c. are consequently the places to fish for them. They seldom sport in the open stream, unless it be in the first of the season, or the day is very fine. Sometimes, in the month of August, or September, they will be found in the stream under a bed of candock, or broad-leaved reeds, which completely cover the bottom of the river, while the water runs over them to the depth of two or three feet; such a place is

often very favourable for live-baiting with the snap hook; but you must show them no quarter, for if they run in among the weeds, you will have some trouble to get them out. After the water has been flooded, you will find them as close to the sedges as possible, in particular, if there be no corner near for them to run into, for as they do not like the stream, they run in quite close to the side to get out of the current of it.

When the season is far advanced, they are generally found in the deepest part of the haunt, and as spring approaches, if the weather be mild, they will move out a little to seek for prey. In ponds and reservoirs, the best places are generally the deepest parts, and if these be, as is frequently the case, in the middle, you must throw your bait out as far as possible, or you will not stand much chance of getting a good fish. If you know of a deep hole anywhere round the sides, fish as near to it as possible. Always prefer gudgeon for baits, as it is a sweet fish, though you may use any other fish except the perch. We have seen some beautiful artificial baits for jack, trout, and perch, made by Mr. Alfred, jun. of Moorgate Street, which we understand

are very killing; and they certainly are very ingeniously made, and must save an angler a great deal of trouble.

THE WAY TO KILL JACK.

Advance to the place where you are going to put in your bait cautiously, and don't go too near the stream at first, for if a fish lie very near the side, you will drive him off. Stand back as far as possible, and if live-baiting, drop in your bait close to the side first; if you do not get a run, try out a little further, and so on until you have put your bait into all the most likely places. If you are fishing with a snap hook, you must, as already hinted, strike as soon as the jack takes your float under. If you are fishing with the side hook, you must let the jack go off with the bait, giving him line as fast as he takes it, and you must not strike at him until he has had it at least ten minutes. If you are trolling, drop your bait into every likely spot very gently; and as you raise it towards the top, keep sinking it, and drawing it, a number of times, until you get it there. Or you may give it a shake, or pull it aside, or make any other

movement with it that will give it the appearance of a live fish. While you are making these movements, if you feel a sudden snatch, you must cease to move your bait immediately, and if it be a take, the fish will soon move off with it, and you must give him line as freely as possible, and ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour, to pouch, as in the other case spoken of. You need not be afraid of his getting away, for if he has pouched the bait, he is sure to be hooked, because he always swallows the fish head first. When you have given him the proper time, wind up your line, and as soon as it is just tight, give him a gentle strike, and if he has pouched, you will soon feel his weight. Don't be in the least hurry with him, especially if he be a good fish, but bring him by degrees as near to you as possible. If he be in danger of running into weeds, or any other dangerous place, you must keep him out as well as you can; and if you were standing in a bad place to land a fish when he took your bait, you must move to the most convenient one near you, while you are bringing him to. Don't venture, under any circumstances, to draw him in until he is still, and quite at your command. If you have any

person with you, get him to land it for you, if not, you must of course do it yourself; and you will be able to do so very easily in most waters, either with a landing net, or hook; if you have neither, put your thumb in one of his eyes, and your finger in the other, and you will hold him as fast as possible. Having landed him, put him into a damp bag, leaving the hook in him, and catch another, to make up a brace, as fast as you can. You must not, however, expect to catch many jack in one day, and will not, in any water, unless you happen to find them very strong on the feed; and even then, the most of them will run small. Bear in mind, that fish under five pounds are called jack, and all above that weight are called pike. A melter, or male fish, of four or five pounds' weight, is the best for the table. They may be boiled, roasted, or baked, according to fancy, and are good eating and nutritious food.—Two or three lines in rhyme, and our chapter is at an end.

THE JACK AND PIKE.

The jack and pike are fish that like
A haunt within the stream,
Just near a hole where lives a shoal
Of gudgeon, roach, or bream.

In smiling day he'll often prey
A little way from home,
But if it's cold, he'll keep his hold,
And seldom from it roam.

Let then your troll just round the hole
Be work'd with tact and skill,
That he may see, and tempted be
His empty pouch to fill.

Then should he take, he will not make
A circuit very wide—
At home he's found, and near the ground
Within his haunt he'll hide.

Yet when he finds that hooks and lines
Are not most pleasant cheer,
He'll make a drive, in which he'll strive
To get his stomach clear.

But give him play in skilful way,
And very soon you'll see
His gills of red and furious head
He'll boldly shake at thee.

And then he's done—his race is run—
His tail he'll scarcely wag;
Mind how you land—he's in your hand!
Just pop him in your bag.

CHAPTER III.

BARBEL FISHING—THE ROD—THE LINE—THE FLOAT—THE HOOK—THE BAITS—THE GROUND-BAITS—PLACES AND TIMES TO FISH FOR BARBEL—THE WAY TO KILL BARBEL—SONG—THE BARBEL.

SOME persons are very fond of angling for barbel, chiefly because he is such a strong and game fish, and is often taken of a great weight. We have ourselves many times sat for several hours, anticipating the undescribable pleasures arising from a contest with one, though after all our endeavours we have frequently been disappointed.

THE ROD.

A rod made of light bamboo, is the best you can have for barbel fishing; it should be from twelve to fifteen feet in length, made very strong, stiff and pliable, with a small ring upon each joint, and two rings round the bottom joint, in which to fasten on your winch.

THE LINE.

You must be very particular in the choice of your line for barbel fishing, or it is not unlikely that it will be broken half a dozen times in the course of a day, if they are on the feed and run large. It should be made of the very best and strongest gut that can be procured. It must also be so made up, that there shall not be any sign of a blemish in it, for if there be, the very first fish you hook will find it out, and away he'll go, perhaps with the greatest part of it hanging to his mouth.

We have taken them with two hooks in the mouth, to which have been attached several feet of gut, which they have borne away triumphantly from some unfortunate anglers who could not hold them. You must take care also, that the piece of gut on which your hook is tied is not too coarse, for if it is, they will not touch the bait; it must be quite round, and straight, and as fine as you can dare venture to fish with. Many anglers are not particular enough in this respect, and that is why they do not get hold of barbel; they have such a keen eye,

that they detect the line, unless it is as fine as it possibly can be: we have proved this by experience. It must be obvious also, from the fact that they will take the bait over and over again when it is on a single hair, and as soon as you change to gut, they will not touch it. But then the difficulty in the affair is, that you cannot hold them with single hair, neither with the gut which is so over fine, unless you are a most expert hand. It is this that renders barbel fishing so pleasing to some, there being in the mind a desire to excel, and to achieve that which is really very difficult. And it certainly is a very difficult thing to kill a barbel of five or six pounds, with a piece of gut so fine that you can hardly see it at any distance; and if any of our readers should feel disposed to be sceptical upon the point, we would advise them just to try the experiment. Yet barbel have been caught with gut, weighing from fifteen to one-and-twenty pounds. Let the shots on your line be as small and as neatly put on as recommended for roach, and they should be at least a foot and a half from your hook, so that they may not be perceived by the fish. Your running line

should be made of platted silk, not too fine; and ten or twelve yards will be sufficient, which for convenience and neatness you may have on a very small winch; or you may make use of that which you use for jack fishing.

If you are fishing in a fine open swim, where there are no dangerous places, and the barbel run small, you may try your skill with a single hair line; and if your hair be very good, and your judgment very superior, you may manage to take a fish or two. We have occasionally taken a fish in that way, but the chances are all against you; you may get plenty of bites, breaks and vexation, but very few fish. You must not put one shot on your gut two or three inches from the hook, as in roach fishing.

THE FLOAT.

You should always have for barbel fishing a float that takes a good number of shots, because your bait must always drag the ground, and a float under a certain size will not have power to keep up while the bait is dragging. If the swim be rapid and the bottom good, five or six inches will not be

too much to drag, but if it be of a more still order, with a bottom that is uneven, you need not drag so much. A reed float is the best, because it is the most solid. If your swim be very deep, your float must be large in proportion, so that it may take a great number of shots; for if this be not the case, your bait will not get to the bottom before it is at the end of your swim. If your swim be quite shallow, be sure you use one as small as convenient, as it will be seen less in the water.

THE HOOK.

In fishing for barbel, it is very important to have hooks of the very best manufacture, and they should always be purchased at a shop upon which you can depend. If they are too highly tempered, they will snap, and if they are not tempered enough, they will turn, and in either case the fish you have hooked will be lost. They should not be too short in the shank, for if they are, the hold will not be so firm. No. 9 is a very good size for ordinary purposes, but a larger may be used if you fish with graves or worms. Be

sure that the point is very sharp, for the barbel is leather-lipped; if therefore the hook is not sharp, it will not penetrate when you strike.

THE BAITS.

There are several baits used in barbel fishing, and they should be varied according to the season and place. In the spring a worm is to be preferred, and it may be a small lob or marsh-worm, about four inches long, and the more clean and lively the better. In the Whitehouse water, Hackney Marsh, this is a very good bait in the month of March. It is also used with great advantage in the Thames in the month of October. Sometimes barbel of great weight are taken with it at these places at such seasons, and your gut may then be of a stronger order then we have described. In the summer, gentles are decidedly the best bait, in all waters; they should be those bred from liver, and in the highest state of perfection. As the season advances, graves may be used with advantage; they should be of the newest and whitest kind, and for the hook, should be soaked in cold water, for

after they have been in boiling or hot, they become too tender to hold on the hook well.

A paste made of strong cheese is sometimes used with good success in ledger fishing, in the month of May in particular; but you cannot keep it on very well, unless you have a triangular hook. With all these baits, be sure that your hook is well hid. With worms, you may do that very easily. With gentles adopt the following method:— First take a small gentle and enter your hook at the very tip of the point of it, and bring it out at the middle of the thick part behind; then push it up over the binding of your hook, letting the point of your gentle just touch the gut. Then take another gentle and pass your hook just through the skin of the hinder part; then take another, and hook it on in the same way, until you have four, five, or six, according to their size, all working about on your hook, which is completely covered, with the exception of the very point of it. This, in my opinion, is the most killing bait of all for barbel, and you may be pretty sure, that if they will not take that, they will not take anything else. With it, also, you will frequently take chub,

dace, roach, bream, or any other fish that may be in the water. With graves, the best plan is to pick out a nice white, tough piece, about as large as you think sufficient for a bait, and then hook it this way and that way, and any way, until the hook is quite covered, all but the point, and it is about as large as a small cherry. Other fish will often take this bait also, chub in particular. If you fish with cheese paste, and have a triangular hook, there will not be any difficulty in baiting it, and it should be about the same size as the bait of graves.

THE GROUND-BAIT.

Gentles, or graves, used with bran and clay, are the best ground-baits for barbel in any water. As it regards gentles, the best plan is to keep them in a bag by themselves, and in another bag of a good size have a quantity of bran. When at the water-side, dig out with your trowel some clay of a good consistency, not too wet, nor yet too dry. Put some pieces of it into the bag with the bran, as big as a large apple, and shake the bran well over them, then, with your hands in the bag, make

them into the shape of cups, then put a handful of gentles into each, and squeeze them up moderately, and then throw them in at the top of your swim, according to the best of your judgment. By adopting this method, all your gentles will be carried to the bottom, and the ball will very soon open and let them out, when they will be dispersed all over the bottom of your swim.

Many anglers waste a great deal of ground-bait by throwing it into the water in an improper manner; and not only so, but it is carried quite out of their swim, and is making quite a feast for the finny tribe at a considerable distance from them, and thereby doing much more harm than good. To make ground-bait of graves and bran, take a large piece of graves, say a pound or two, according to what you may think you shall want, and break it up fine, with a hammer; then put it into a pan, and pour on it as much boiling water as you think it will soak up: when it has absorbed the water, put with it about two quarts of bran, stir it together and put it into a bag. When at the water, mix with it some clay, and throw it in, in balls about the size of those with gentles. We have frequently used this ground-

bait, when we have baited our hook with gentles, and have found it answer very well, especially in deep, gentle swims.

PLACES AND TIMES TO FISH FOR BARBEL.

Barbel will feed either in a gentle or a swift swim, though generally, in the summer, they prefer the latter. They are not, however, to be caught anywhere in the stream, though it may abound with them, for they always have their favourite haunts, and places where they know they shall find food. They are very fond of a deep eddy from which there is a smart run on to a shallow. And the reason is obvious; for in such places, the food that comes down with the stream is stirred up, and lodges on the shallow near it. In such places they are to be found in the warm weather, and, like pigs in a farm-yard, they will rout about it with their underhung mouths close on the ground, picking up everything in the shape of food, but a baited hook with a line attached to it! They are sly rogues, and consume a good deal of food when they are on the feed, for I have taken them frequently with many hundreds of gentles in their stomachs, which,

of course, they must have picked up one by one. When you are fishing for them in these shallow swims, you must be sure to keep off the water, or you will never get one, they know the sight of an angler too well. Another favourite place for them is in deep shaded holes, where the roots of the trees, and part of the trees themselves, are in the water; in, and near to, such places, they will frequently feed pretty well, but they are very dangerous places to get hold of them in, for you can seldom bring them out unless your tackle be very strong.

As it regards times to fish for them, they will feed frequently all day, if it be dark and lowering; but if it be bright, you stand very little chance of taking any until the sun is off the water; and the nearer it approaches to dusk, the more likely you are to hook them. We have very frequently taken the best fish when we could hardly see our float. And this teaches us how very necessary it is to have very fine tackle, for they would take the bait as freely in the light, were it not that they see it is fastened to the line. I have sometimes kept a hook and gut soaking in the water, of a larger and stronger kind, and just

before dark have taken my fine one off, and looped that on, and have found it answer well, for I have been able to kill my fish without fear; that is, when I have been so fortunate as to get one. I have also, in the summer, taken very good barbel just before sunrise in the morning, and an hour or two after that time; but early and late fishing for them is only successful in really warm weather, and as the season becomes advanced, one time of the day is as good as another. Like all the other finny race, barbel feed best during soft, genial, damp weather, when the wind is in the south, or south-west. Sometimes, after a heavy shower, they will feed very freely.

THE WAY TO KILL BARBEL.

As we have already said, you must let your bait drag on the ground several inches, when fishing for barbel, consequently, your float will often go under a little when there is no bite. You must, therefore, learn to distinguish between a bite, and a stop made by the ground. Generally speaking, a bite affects your float more suddenly, and it goes under more quickly than when it is pulled under by the ground. But the best plan is, to strike

pretty often and pretty smartly, so that the hook may enter his leathery lip. He is a good fish to hook, because his mouth is underhung; but the grand point is, to get the hook well into him. Sometimes, if it be a large fish, when you strike, it will feel as though you had hold of the bottom, or had become fastened to a log, for his lips being like leather, he does not feel the hook, and, therefore, makes no effort to get away from it. In that case, or in any other, never give the least slack line, but keep tight on him, getting your rod up straight over him, and fixing the butt of it close against your right side. Never let him point you, (that is, run out and pull the point of your rod into the water,) for if he do that, it is all over with you directly. Keep your rod up over him, in spite of all his pulling, tugging and driving, only letting him have a yard or so of your running line, according to the nature of your swim. If he be ever so large, he will not be able to break you, if your tackle be really good, so long as he is completely under the bend of your rod, for as he pulls, so that gives. This is the grand art in killing all large fish, keeping them the whole of the time bearing on the play of your rod. And the

power of the manœuvre may be easily illustrated. Let any angler put his rod and line together and hold it up, while you lay hold of the bottom of the line and pull and try to break it, you will find that the power must be tremendous, according to the real strength of the apparatus. Thus then it is in angling; and as soon as the fish gets away from that power over him, he will very soon get away from you altogether.

If you are fishing for barbel in a deep, dangerous hole, where there are roots of bushes, or trees, in the water, as soon as you hook a fish, he will make for the roots and bushes, just as a wounded rabbit makes for the hedge; and if he once get under them, you will be a very clever fellow if ever you get him out again. You must, therefore, in such a place, give him scarcely any running line at all, but hold him by main force in the middle of your swim. If your swim be quite open, and your fish cannot run into danger, you may give more line accordingly. Don't be in a hurry to get him out of the water, especially if he be a heavy fish, for the hook will not come out of him easily, and after his first desperate struggling is over, he will allow you to lead him about

a little, so long as you do not bring him to the top of the water. Take care, then, that you tire him quite out, before you attempt to draw him out of his element. Many a good barbel has been lost, by attempting to bring him too soon to the net. Some persons fish for barbel with a ledger bait, and others with a clay ball, with baited hooks in it, but as we do not consider them skilful and scientific ways, we say no more about them. In no case attempt to land a barbel without a landing-net or hook.

The barbel is considered by most persons a rather coarse eating fish; but there is a sweetness in the flesh of them when they are in season, which is agreeable to some palates. They may be dressed in the same way as jack and pike. As we have sung of the roach, the jack, and the pike, I suppose we must do the same of the barbel. But we must beg the indulgence of our angling friends, for we know that some of them are rather poetical, and they must recollect, too, that it is the young, in particular, that read angler's guides.

THE BARBEL.

The barbel, with his leathery nose,
Comes from the sea, as some suppose,
But lives and feeds in rivers fair,
And loves the summer's sun and air.

No fish more sly the stream contains,
And none more often triumph gains
O'er rods, and lines, and hooks, and bait,
While anglers mourn their hapless fate.

One's snapp'd his top, close at the joint,
Another's let the rascal point,
A third has lost his line complete,
A fourth, his hook and several feet.

And then 'tis farcical to see
What winks, and smirks, and smiles there be,
While one confounds the barbel's jaws,
And some one else with laughter roars.

Thus merrily, anglers pass a day
Where flowers expand and sunbeams play,
Where all the cares and woes they know,
From barbels' wily frolics flow.

Then let the angler's skill improve,
Each blemish from his lines remove,
His patience daily greater grow,
And then, to fish for barbel, go.

CHAPTER IV.

ROACH AND DACE FISHING—GENERAL INSTRUCTION—SONG—THE YOUNG ANGLER.

MANY hundreds of anglers, especially young ones, know no more of the piscatory art than that which is exercised in catching a few small roach and dace, two or three times during the summer when they have a holiday. And we well recollect the time, when our knowledge extended no further, and yet the great pleasure we enjoyed while thus engaged; when, free from every care, in schoolboy trim, with our rod and basket, we brushed along, all alone, to our favourite little swim, anticipating not only the pleasure of catching the fish, but that we should enjoy when we showed them to those who are now sleeping in the silent tomb. Yes, those were happy days, but they are gone for ever! It is to such in particular that we would throw out a few hints, to

enable them to take a few roach and dace during their leisure hours. We need not, however, be so particular in our description of tackle, baits, &c. as we have been in the former chapters, because much of the instruction given in them will be of use in all the other branches of angling which we may describe. We shall, therefore, only have to refer our readers back to those instructions. As for instance, the tackle we have recommended for roach fishing, is just suitable for roach and dace. Or a rod similar to that used for barbel will answer tolerably well, though it will not, of course, be so light and pleasant in the hand, and will be more likely to break the single hair-line in striking, &c. But with such a rod you may, if you please, use a fine gut line, though the hair is always to be preferred, as with care you may take with it two or three fish to every one you take with the gut. The hook you use in fishing for roach and dace should always be very fine: a No. 11, or 12, is quite large enough; for in this fishing you not only take roach and dace, but gudgeon, bleak, small chub, &c.; and if it be not small, it will not answer for all.

As it regards baits for roach and dace fishing,

gentles are always to be preferred, and with them, and bran, ground-bait your swim in exactly the same manner as described for barbel; and the more of them you throw in, the more fish you will be likely to take. The most killing way to bait your hook is with one only, of the largest you have, hooking it through the thick part behind, so that it shall keep moving about on the hook; and if you do not take a fish with it during a good many swims, take it off and put on a fresh one, for it will not be so tempting when it is dead. In this kind of fishing, always let your float be so adjusted, that your bait shall just touch the ground; and you must strike at every bite you have, and that as quickly as possible, for dace, in particular, are a very sharp-biting fish, and if you do not have them in the instant, you will not have them at all.

With respect to places in which to fish, you will generally find a good number of swims for roach and dace in most subscription waters; if, however, these should be engaged, or you are fishing in a free water, the best places are in a run from an eddy, or in an opening between two beds of weeds, or in a place very close to the bank of the river where it is a

little deeper than the other parts around. In any such places, roach and dace are to be taken if the water run pretty briskly. But be sure that you keep out of sight, for the water being in such places not more than two or three feet deep, and, at the seasons to fish, generally very clear, it is of no use whatever trying to get any fish if you are seen, or are moving about the stream—you must take your seat and keep it. Sometimes you will see, in the height of the summer, a great number of dace, in an open shallow where there is not a weed near, and where the current is rather strong. We have frequently taken a good number in such places by adopting the following plan:—We have taken our seat very cautiously, as near to them as we could venture, so as not to drive them off, and judging as well as we could the depth of the water, we have made our line as long as we could possibly use it; having on it a very small float, with only two or three shots, and throwing in our ground-bait just before us, we have let our baited hook swim down the river, as near to the dace as possible,—and as sure as it went in among the shoal, so sure we were of a fish.

Not many miles from the source of the Lea,

in the meadow of a friend, we took one day, in two or three hours, a complete basketful in this manner. And we might have taken as many more, only our friend came to see how we were getting on, and drove them all away.

We give this incident to prove the great importance of not being seen while angling.

The best time for roach and dace fishing is in warm weather. You may begin in April, if the water be in good condition, and take them till October if the weather continue open. When you have caught them, take care of them, clean, cook, and eat them, if you feel so disposed, in the same manner as recommended for roach.

THE YOUNG ANGLER.

From strife and noise of other boys,
  Young anglers oft repair,
Where rivers flow and flowers blow
  In summer's sun and air.

And better there than anywhere
  Where vice its power displays—
And let them go, and let them know
  Their choice obtains our praise.

To such we say—While blythe and gay,
  Be contemplative too,
And do not let your mind forget
  The stream resembles you.

How small its source! but in its course
How full, how deep, how wide!
And onward's forced, at last 'tis lost
Within the ocean's tide!

So men at first, caress'd and nursed,
Of small importance seem;
But grown in years, their power appears
Full,—widening like the stream.

But time rolls on, and 'tis not long
Before of them 'tis said—
From earth they're pass'd, and to a vast
Eternity have fled.

Then let me say in friendly way—
Whate'er young anglers do,
Let them be wise, and virtue prize,
And keep the end in view.

CHAPTER V.

GUDGEON FISHING — GENERAL INSTRUCTION — SONG, THE GUDGEON.

FISHING for gudgeon expressly is only practised in the first of the season,—say from the beginning of May till a week or two in June; and as this is decidedly the worst of the time during the summer for other kinds of angling, many pass a pleasant hour in fishing for gudgeon.

Your tackle should be of a very light and fine character;—that used for roach will be the best, and your hook should be No. 12; and your bait, a blood-worm; or, if you cannot get that, a very small red worm. Bright days and clear water are most favourable; and as they are less shy than any of the scaly community, you need not be so very particular in your place and movements. The places to fish for them are open gravelly shallows, where

the water runs briskly: and your bait must just touch the ground. You do not coax them around you with ground-bait, as you do other fish, but make the ground itself answer that purpose by stirring it up with a rake, made expressly for gudgeon fishing. This rake is put into the water, and having a handle longer than your rod, you place it at the head of your swim, just above where you put in your baited hook. Before you begin to fish, you rake up the ground with it, and the fine particles of gravel, or sand, thicken that part of the water in which your bait passes along—the gudgeon are drawn to the spot by the thick water, and are hunting in it for whatever food it may contain, and they generally find your baited hook among the rest, and pick it up.

Having taken a number of swims, you rake your ground again, and so you go on all the while you are fishing for them. Many dozens of gudgeons are often taken in this way in a few hours. They are a very sweet and delicate little fish, and are much prized by some persons; but they require much care in keeping them, or they are all spoiled before you get them home. A very good plan is, to have a good sized bag, with about a quarter of

a peck of bran in it, and as you catch them put them into it, shaking the bran over them now and then. This keeps them from spoiling one another, which they will do if you are not very careful with them, for they are exceedingly tender, and the weather in which you catch them being warm, an hour or two will spoil them. The best rivers to catch them are the Lea and the Thames; in the latter they often run a very good size. The directions given in the chapter on roach, with regard to cooking, &c., will answer admirably for gudgeon.

THE GUDGEON.

When flowers of May
Are seen smiling and gay,
While skylarks sing sweetly on high,
And fair nature is dress'd
In her loveliest vest,
'Tis time, then, for gudgeon to try.

But some one may say
In sarcastical way,—
Who would be seen fishing for gudgeon?
But better there found,
Than on culpable ground,
Or feeling a something like dudgeon.

Whatever things please,
If they harm not, nor tease,
Are not to be treated with scorn;
For pleasure is worth,
And the smallest on earth
Should not be from us wantonly torn.

Then let us take all
That within our reach fall,
And repine not though they may be few;
And be thankful likewise
For all joys that we prize,
As this troublesome world we pass through.

Proud men, of much might,
But of not so much right,
Who are toiling for honours and riches,
Are often outdone
By some calm, happy one,
Who is taking a few little fishes.

For might, fame, and gold,
(As we've learn'd from of old,)
Often bring with them much care and woe;
But never can we
Ever unhappy be
Just because gudgeon fishing we go.

Then let cannons roar,
And destructive swords draw,
And intrigue and oppression be rife;—
But let anglers fish
For a nice little dish
Of fat gudgeon, each May of their life.

CHAPTER VI.

CHUB FISHING—GENERAL INSTRUCTION—SONG, THE CHUB.

THE tackle described for barbel fishing is in every way adapted for chub, with the exception of the hook, which should be larger. The bait also used for barbel are used for chub. The places, too, where barbel are found very frequently contain chub; and you may take them occasionally in the same swim, and at the same time of the year. Yet they are very different fish, and have very different habits. They are much more common in some waters than others, but they seldom abound in any; and in all, they are generally taken only one or two now and then, more as chance fish, than in the regular order of angling. They are also a fish of prey, and will sometimes take a bait the same as a jack. We were fishing for roach and dace, one beautiful summer's morning, early, and a chub seized

a small dace we were drawing out, and shook it with all the boldness of a large jack, and would, we think, have pouched it if we had let him, but we would not, because he would only have broken our single hair line. But we changed our line in two or three minutes, and put on a strong gut and a large bait of graves, and manœuvred it about the swim, something like trolling; and had not done so many minutes, before he took it, and we took him; and a handsome fellow he was, weighing above three pounds.

After that incident, and knowing that there were a good many chub in the water, we tried to catch some others in the same manner, but did not succeed.

Chub will take a bait at any time in the year, but are generally fished for most in the winter. At Broxbourn, and other parts of the Lea, they are to be taken at that season in the deepest parts, when the water is in good condition. Graves, at that time of the year, are generally used for bait, both for the ground and the hook; and they are found to succeed well. But the regular old-fashioned way of fishing for chub in the winter, is with bullocks' brains; and it is decidedly the most killing

way, for if anything will tempt them to feed, it is that bait. It is not, however, followed by many, because it is considered rather a messy affair;—people do not like to meddle with brains, any more than they like their brains meddled with. We shall not, therefore, be very particular in our description of that method of fishing, but merely say, that the brains should be boiled, cut up, and mixed well with fine gravel, or sand, and thus thrown into the water for ground-bait; and the hook baited with a nice round, solid piece; or you may use for the hook, what is much to be preferred,—a piece of the pith from the back-bone, which will keep on the hook much better. With this bait they are sometimes taken of very good size. In the spring they are taken in some waters with a large ground grub, which is found under the grass; or that found in gardens, which is a great destroyer of young lettuce plants, &c., is preferred by them; or they will, in some waters, take freely a scarlet coloured paste; or, like the barbel and other fish, at that season of the year, they will take a worm. But they are seldom fished for then, expressly. In the summer, they get on the shallows, and are

frequently to be seen in company with the dace in those places; and they will sometimes take the fly pretty freely, as will also the dace, at that time of the year. You may then dip for them with a silk line, a No. 9 hook, and any natural fly that you can catch. You must let the wind be behind you, so that it may blow your silk line over the stream, and then you must let your fly keep dipping where you think the fish may be, when, if so disposed, they will rise and take it. We have seen some very fine chub and dace taken in this way. Or you may use a perfect fly-rod and whip-line, with artificial flies, which is decidedly a more pleasant and scientific method of taking them. In the Lea, between Stratford and the White-house water, on the shallows, in the month of July, we have seen some very good sport in this way of fishing. Or you may bottom fish for them in these places, with a long line, a good sized hook, and a bait of gentles or graves;—keeping out of sight, and letting your bait swim in among them, as spoken of in the chapter on roach and dace. We have taken them in this way frequently.

In the summer, early in the morning is decidedly the best time to fish for chub, and

in the winter the middle of the day. Some anglers try for them in the summer evenings, with a ledger line, and two or three large baits of paste on it, and just before dark they will sometimes take a good fish. When bottom fishing for chub, let your bait be an inch or so off the ground, or more, according as you see they take it in the swim. Always have your running line ready to go out, for as soon as ever you hook them, they invariably make one desperate drive to get away from you, and if you do not let them go, and they happen to be large—a separation is pretty sure to take place between you. But after that one desperate effort, they will allow you to do just as you please with them, so that you need not have any fear of bringing them to the net. Chub are, in fact, taking them altogether, rather a peculiar fish, and chub fishing, rather a hazardous kind of sport; and that is one grand reason why it is not much followed. There has, however, been some, who are now no more, who have taken a good deal of pleasure in chub fishing, and at times they have been pretty successful. And it cannot be denied, that some fine chub in a dish look very catching to the eye, for they

are a very handsome fish, though not much prized for the table. Under all these circumstances, therefore, we suppose that chub must be honoured with a stave.

THE CHUB.

Wily chub likes a deep shaded hole,
And will sometimes there rise at a fly;
Or will now and then snap at the troll,
If it happen to pass him close by.

He is handsome, and looks very bold;
But is false—like a number of men;—
He will feed in the heat and the cold,
But 'twill only be just now and then.

When he's hook'd, he will fly like a dart,
And it matters not much to him where;
But your tackle he'll then often part,
If you use not your skill and your care.

Yet after that rush he has made,
He'll resign himself up to his fate;
And you need not to land be afraid
Though he be of considerable weight.

In the Spring, for them scarlet paste make;
In the Summer, use any good fly;
In the Autumn, they'll graves often take;
In the Winter, with brains you should try.

They'll, in fact, take almost any bait,
But 'tis only just when they're inclined,
And you'll oft have a long time to wait,
Ere they'll be of a feedable mind.

All these things, then, consider'd, we see
Not much sport the chub-fisher attends;
But we leave them all just as they be,
For the use of our angling friends.

If we can't have things just as we would,
Then we must have them just as we can;
And the way to make chub-fishing good,
Is to be quite a chub-fishing man.

CHAPTER VII.

PERCH FISHING—GENERAL INSTRUCTION—SONG, THE PERCH, AND HIS FATE.

PERCH are fished for in two ways and two only, either with worms, or live bait. When you fish for them with worms, you should use the same rod that you use for barbel, with a strong gut line, a good sized float, and a hook, about No. 7, or 8, according to the size of the fish you take. You may fish for perch at any depth you please, as they are not at all particular as to where they take it. This being the case, if the water in which you are fishing be deep, it is a good plan to have a paternoster line, with three or four hooks on it, one at the bottom, another about eighteen inches higher, and another the same distance above that, and so on. In this way we have had very good sport in deep water, when they have been on the feed. But

when you use a line of this kind, you must not, as some do, merely loop gut-hooks on the line, about a foot long, and let them dangle down and twist all round your line, for if you do, they had, in our opinion, much better be off the line altogether, for you will very seldom find a fish take a bait in such a state. All the hooks but the bottom one should be tied on bristles, about three inches long, and these should be looped on, and they will then stand out quite away from the line. Don't put them on your line at home, and bend them in putting them on your reel, because that will spoil them; keep them straight in a paper in your case till you want to use them, and when at the water loop them on, and they will stand out well.

If perch are quite on the feed they will take any sort of worms, but we think the best to use always is the red, and they should be a good size, and well scoured. In baiting your hook, do no more damage to the worm than you can help, so that it shall move well on the hook, for fish always prefer a lively bait. This should be borne in mind in all worm fishing, especially if the fish are dainty. You need not be so quick in striking perch as roach or

dace; you may give them a little time to get the worm into their mouth, for very frequently they get hold of the end of it only at first, and if you strike then, you will miss your fish. Give them a little time to get your float under, and then strike, and if your hook be a good size, you will be pretty sure of them. When you fish for perch with live bait, that is, with minnows or other very small fish, you may use your jack tackle, if you please; and it is quite as well to do so, in case you should get hold of a jack, which is very frequently the case. And sometimes a large jack will take a very small bait, for we have frequently found in their pouch a number not more than an inch long. When live-baiting for perch also, let your gut be pretty strong at the hook, for if it be not, it will be likely to cut against their teeth. You can fish at any depth you please, but we always prefer mid-water. There are two ways of baiting with the minnow—one by putting the hook just under the back fin, and the other, by putting it through both lips; we prefer the latter. When they take it, give them a little time before you strike, and strike the contrary way to that they are going. The places for perch,

are generally those in and about where jack frequent. A corner, a shallow near a deep hole, an eddy, a rough made by a tumbling-bay, or a still hole near it, are all likely places. As it regards the time for perch-fishing, the spring is decidedly the best in rivers, though they will feed in some, more or less, all the year round. In large ponds, docks, &c., they will not feed, generally, until the weather gets warm. They are a fish that is operated upon very strongly by the weather. We have known them to come on the feed quite strong at the springing up of a stiff breeze, and leave off as quickly when it had subsided. But a good wind is always favourable, both for perch and jack, for if the water be quite still you seldom get much sport. When you take perch out of the water, mind how you handle them, for their back fin and part of their head will cut you like a knife. They are a very good fish for the table, and may be cooked with their scales on, if you do not like the trouble of taking them off, and then after they are cooked take them off altogether, skin and all. We prefer to have them scaled before they are cooked; but it is quite a task, especially for any one who is not used to it, or has not

any patience to spare. Perch are found, more or less, in most rivers, and in some ponds and still waters they are very abundant. We shall conclude our chapter with two or three verses, narrating an incident respecting a perch, which occurred with us some twenty years back :—

THE PERCH, AND HIS FATE.

One day an anxious angler plied
His art within the pearly tide,
To catch some roach and dace;
With line of hair, and tiny hook,
And gentles white, he numbers took,
With decent skill and grace.

Just then a perch, not quite a pound,
Was lurking in the sedges round,
And felt inclined for food;
And as the angler rose a dace,
He seized it straight before his face
In really perch-like mood.

The angler look'd, the perch held tight,
The scales came off the dace, and bright
They sparkled in the stream;
And pouch'd his body would have been
Had not the angler danger seen,
And spoil'd the gluttonous dream.

The dace rescued, down went the perch,
But only in his haunt to lurch
'Till he again could prey;
The angler plied again his skill,
Intent his basket's void to fill,
Forgetful of the fray.

But only two or three he'd caught,
Ere midway in the stream he brought
A small, but struggling dace;
When out the perch from ambush burst,
And seized him as he did the first,
And in the selfsame place.

"Well," said the angler, "bold you are,
And, just for fun, I'll see how far
You'll go with your intent."
And in that mind he let him make
His pulls, and shakes, and strains to take,
'Till down his throat it went.

And down went he, quite out of sight,
Thinking, no doubt, that all was right,
But soon he found 'twas wrong;
For now, the angler play'd his part,
And with his hair made perch to smart,
For it was pretty strong.

He held him tight with might and main,
And perchy pull'd and pull'd again,
But could not get away;
For from the dace the hook had slipp'd,
And gone clean through his upper lip,
And there he was at bay!

The wondering angler swung him out,
Still wondering how it came about—
And often since has thought,
How such a change could come to pass,
And how the dace was saved at last,
And how the perch was caught!

Yet, so it was, for we were there,
And saw the whole of the affair
As plainly as could be;
We, therefore, for the truth can vouch,
And more—we search'd the perch's pouch,
And there no dace could see.

From hence we may a moral draw:
There have been men, and may be more,
  Who, with rapacious pride,
Have, like the perch, pounced on their prey—
But it has proved an evil day,
  For in the affair they've died.

Let truth and virtue lead our way;
Then wit may talk, and fun may play,
  If wisdom join the throng:
In all our doings temperate be,
That all who may our conduct see
  May never see us wrong.

CHAPTER VIII.

EELS, CARP, TENCH, BREAM, ETC.—FOUR WAYS TO CATCH EELS—THE WAY TO TAKE CARP—TENCH, THEIR HABITS, ETC.

We class these in one chapter, because we wish to compress our work as much as possible, and because they are not so important as those spoken of before. There are several ways of catching eels; we will just notice one or two. That which is most followed by anglers is, with two rods and lines of any kind, and upon each line two or three hooks, half-a-yard apart, baited with worms, and having a ledger lead to sink them. Throw them into the middle of the stream, twenty or thirty yards distant from each other, and if the eels are on the run, you will soon see a bite by the way in which your rod is pulled; and while you are taking off the eel and baiting, you will very likely have another bite at the other rod and line, to which you will have to attend when you have thrown that in hand into the water;

and thus you go on all down the stream, carrying first one rod and then the other a little further on, as you take them out to attend to them, &c. A good many eels may be taken in this way, but only in the month of May or June, when they are on the run; and the best time is after heavy showers, &c.

Another way to catch eels, is by a method which is called sniggling, which is only practised also in the summer; for this purpose the rod is short and strong, without a top joint, and across the end of it there is tied a piece of whalebone, or wire, about a foot long, which points down to the water; the point of this whalebone or wire is made sharp. The line is made of strong whip-cord, a few yards long, and on the end is a strong needle, fastened in the middle very neatly: the bait is a lob-worm, and the needle is forced into it so that it is completely covered. This worm and needle is put on the end of the whalebone at the top of the rod, by entering the sharp point of the whalebone into the worm; you then go along the side of the river, and wherever you see a hole within your reach, you put in the worm and then let it slip off the end of the whalebone. If

there be an eel in the hole, he will most likely take it and draw it into the hole; when he has had it a minute or so, you give the line a smart pull, and if he has swallowed the worm when you pull, the needle goes across his stomach and forces through to the outside; he is then fast, and you must do your best to get him out of his hole. If he be a large eel he will not come out until he is completely forced, and in that case you must turn your line a number of times round the top of your rod and force him out with it.

Another way of catching eels is by what is called bobbing; in that case, your rod, which is short and strong, has at the top of it a small pulley, like the ancient trolling rods, and one or two rings, and your line is strong cord; your bait is a number of lob-worms threaded on coarse worsted and tied in a bunch, with a piece of lead to sink them. This bunch of worms is tied to your line, which is put through the pulley and rings, and held in your left hand while the rod is held in your right. You then go to a bed of weeds, or any place where you think the eels are, and let the bunch of worms down among them; when they lay hold you will feel them,

and then pulling up the bunch of worms gently, they will not be able to disentangle their teeth from the worsted before you lift them on the land, or into the boat, if you are fishing from one. This is quite an ancient method of catching eels.

Another, and a much more successful way, is with an eel-basket or pot; it is made with osier twigs, and has a mouth, or entrance, like a rat or mouse-trap, so that the eels can go in but cannot get out, and it is baited with small fish; it is then sunk in the river with a brick tied to it, in any likely place, and during the night the eels run into it, and sometimes completely fill it; it is then taken out in the morning. Where we lived in the country for a short time, there was a small run of water from the river, at the bottom of our garden, and one day we saw eels running along in it; we went to a basket-maker in the neighbourhood and got a basket made, and the first night we put it down we caught several, and the next night about half a peck, and very fine eels they were. We sent some in to our next-door neighbour, who thanked us very much for them, as he was very fond of them; and he asked us where we caught them. We

told him, at the bottom of the garden; he stared, and could hardly believe us, until we showed him the basket, when he lifted up both hands and exclaimed: "Well, I have lived here these forty years, and never dreamed of catching one, so fond as I am of them; bless my soul, what a fool I have been!" The eel is a serpentine fish, but it is highly nutritious.

Carp are not very frequently found in rivers in any great number, but they are to be found in ponds in abundance, especially the Prussian, which always run very small. Carp will take either paste or worms, and they feed best in the summer. They grow to a very great size, and are a very game fish, and will not give in to the angler until they have exhausted every modicum of strength they possess; and even after that, they will live in your basket for a number of hours, as though they were determined to live in spite of you. Some people prize them for the table, but others think them coarse eating.

Tench are in their habits similar to carp, and consequently they always live well together, many ponds in the kingdom possessing scarcely any other fish. Tench will take a worm sometimes very freely in the summer,

after warm showers. It is a very rich and delicate fish, in flavour not unlike the eel, and is very nutritious food. It is not common in rivers, only one or two being taken now and then. It always frequents the most muddy places, and is a strong, game fish, when hooked.

Bream are found more frequently in rivers than carp and tench, but, like them, they are more abundant in docks, ponds, and other still waters. They grow to several pounds' weight, and are very easily killed with a single hair. The directions given for roach will answer for bream in every respect, and therefore we need not give any further instruction respecting them. They are spoken of by many persons in this country as a worthless sort of fish; but it is well known that they are esteemed as quite a delicacy on the continent, and we consider them very good if properly cooked, &c.

Bleak are a pretty little lively fish, always seen in warm weather, on the top of the water, taking every fly that comes within their reach. They make very good sport for the young angler, as he can catch them with a fly, on the top of the water, or with a gentle, about a foot deep, with a small float and hair line.

Thus we have spoken of the best methods of angling for every fish generally taken in the rivers in our country, with the exception of trout; and as trout-fishing may be considered a department of angling peculiar to itself, it will be found near the end of our book:—not placed there because it is of little importance, but because we are aware that a great number of anglers have not the opportunities of following it.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RIVER LEA, AND ITS FISHERIES.

No river round London is such a favourite with anglers as the Lea, and no one is better stored with the various kinds of fish that are common in rivers. It contains trout, jack, roach, dace, bream, carp, tench, gudgeon, bleak, eels, &c., and all these are as fine of their kind as are to be found in any other river in the kingdom, and some of them finer. It being fishable too so near the metropolis, renders it a great source of attraction; and there being railway stations now near to the fisheries which it contains, makes them accessible to all who feel disposed to enjoy the pleasure of breathing pure air for a few hours while engaged in angling recreation. The Londoner may now spend an hour or two in angling as easily as he can make a call on a relation or friend, or see the newspaper and have a chat over politics. He may put his

case of lines, &c., into his pockets, jump into the train, and be at the water-side in a few minutes—fish as long time as he can spare, jump into the train again, bring home his fish, put away his case, and no one knows that he has been fishing but his wife and family; and the exercise he has taken, and the air he has breathed, will do him much more good than all the physic contained in any one of the finest doctors' shops in the kingdom.

The river Lea rises in Bedfordshire, passes in its course through Hertfordshire, and from thence runs between Essex and Middlesex, and falls into the Thames at Blackwall. We shall just mention the fisheries it contains in rotation, beginning with those nearest to London.

There is not much angling in the Lea from Blackwall, until you get to Temple Mills. At Bromley, Stratford, and Old Ford, fish are to be taken in the summer; but the tide running in from the Thames, when it is high, renders it unpleasant fishing. But as soon as you get within a quarter of a mile of the White Hart, Temple Mills, the water becomes good, and the scenery pleasant. The water here is free, on to the posts in the water, on which are placed the coat of arms of the City of London,

near the white bridge. The Lead-mill river also, that runs through the garden of the White Hart, is free. This being the case, a number of young anglers in particular resort thither in the summer to enjoy their favourite recreation free of all expense; and those who are skilful often obtain very good sport, as the water is well stored with fish.

The first subscription fishery is the White House, which commences from the white bridge. It contains some very good swims for roach, barbel, dace, gudgeon, perch, chub, carp, &c., and some very good haunts for jack. We have seen in this water about the bridge mentioned, as many large fish of various kinds as would have filled a town cart. And in the shallows in the month of April, roach by thousands, when they are spawning. A good number of barbel and jack, and a great many roach and dace, are taken here every season. The subscription is 10*s.* 6*d.* a-year. The accommodation at the White House, which is private, is very good.

The next fishery is the Horse and Groom, Lea Bridge, kept by Mr. Jas. Berresford, sen., who for a number of years lived at the White House just named, which is still held

by him, but attended to by his eldest son. He is the oldest keeper of water on the Lea, having been at the White House and the Horse and Groom together for between forty and fifty years, and is still as kind and as obliging as ever. This water is very good, retired and pleasant, and abounds with fish of all the various kinds. It is in many parts very deep, and therefore harbours fish in abundance. There are many excellent swims for roach, barbel, chub, carp, dace, perch, gudgeon, &c., and a great number of jack and pike are taken every season. There is a tumbling bay near the house, in which, in the spring, many barbel and chub are taken by ledgering. Barbel are frequently taken in this water of ten or twelve pounds' weight, and occasionally from that weight to twenty-one pounds. There will be shortly another tumbling bay made in this water, which will be a further acquisition: and the "East London Water Company" will obtain their water by a cut from Ponder's End very shortly, and not from the water in this locality, which will be an improvement to this fishery. The subscription is 10*s.* 6*d.* a-year. The railway station is within a few minutes' walk of it, and there

is the best accommodation at the house either for large or small parties. From this fishery the water is free for above a mile, and contains a good many roach, dace, chub, &c.; but there are so many barges, and boats hired for the recreation of rowing, that there is not much sport for those who fish in it.

The next fishery is at Tottenham, called The Ferry House, kept by Mr. Tyler, and is a pretty rural water, and well stored with all the various kinds of fish common to the Lea. The subscription is 10*s.* 6*d.* a-year.

Passing onwards, the next fishery is Ford's, which is a fine deep piece of water, containing a great many fine jack, chub, carp, roach, &c. The subscription is 1*l.* for trolling and bottom fishing, and 10*s.* for bottom fishing only.

The next fishery is Wick's, which is the old Cook's Ferry House. This water is very excellent, and contains a great number of jack, and an abundance of all the other finny tribes, and the accommodation at the house good. The subscription is 1*l.* 1*s.* a-year trolling, and 10*s.* 6*d.* for bottom fishing. The next fishery is that called the Chingford Water, and is renowned for the fine jack and roach which are taken there every season.

A select number of gentlemen subscribe 1*l.* 1*s.* a-year, to keep Mrs. Bullin in the house, and, we understand, intend to do so as long as she lives—whether they angle or not—a proof that anglers are philanthropic men. The house is very rural, and the scenery around very delightful. The next fishery is that kept by Mr. Thomas Kidd, at the Anchor and Pike. The subscription is 10*s.* a-year, and the angler has the privilege of fishing in three pieces of water, well stored with jack and pike, roach and dace, chub, and some fine barbel. There is at the snug little house the very best of accommodation, Mr. Kidd being ever ready to oblige to the utmost of his ability. From hence, we pass on to the waters at Waltham Abbey, which formerly belonged to Government, but are now let out as subscription waters, one belonging to Mr. Clark, and the other to Mr. Lack; the subscription to Mr. Clark's is 1*l.* 1*s.*, and to Mr. Lack's, 10*s.* There is every accommodation at the houses, and the waters contain an abundance of fish, jack in particular. The next water is kept by Mr. Page, and contains some fine jack, chub, roach, perch, &c.; the subscription is 10*s.*, and the spot very

retired. Then come the renowned Broxbourn waters, kept by Mr. Binningfield, at the Old Crown; here a great number of roach, jack, and chub are taken every season, and every attention is paid to anglers to make them comfortable. And then, last but not least, come the famous waters at the Old Rye House, so renowned in history, kept by Mr. Teal, which is decidedly a very pretty place, and excelled by no other fishery on the Lea. It has long been a favourite place for jack fishing, and every other kind of fish may be taken here in the season. Every attention is paid by Mr. Teal to his subscribers and visitors, and there is no place round London more calculated for a little piscatory pleasure. The river from thence to the source is full of fish, among which is a good number of fine trout.

Thus we have just glanced at the Lea and its fisheries, and we feel quite sure that there is no river in the kingdom that bears any likeness to it for the fish it contains, and for the pleasure it is calculated to give to the lovers of angling. Some parts of it have been preserved for nearly a century, and many others for above half that time, and therefore it must abound with fish.

CHAPTER X.

THE RIVER THAMES, AND ITS FISHERIES.

THE Thames is the principal river in Britain; it comes from two sources, or small rivers, in Gloucestershire, the Churn and the Isis; these unite near Cricklade, Wilts, where it receives several small rivulets; thence, in its course to London, it receives the Coln, Lech, Charwell, Ock, Thame, Kennet, Loddon, Wey, Mole, Brent and Wandle. After it passes London, it receives the Lea, Roding, and Darent, and parting in its course Essex from Kent, it runs into the German Ocean. It is well stocked with roach, dace, barbel, jack, pike, carp, bream, bleak, gudgeon, flounders, eels, white-bait, smelts, &c., with some fine trout at the source, and occasionally salmon at the mouth. Time was when Thames salmon were plentiful, and the finest in the kingdom; and they would, in the winter, force themselves up the

Lea and other rivers to spawn, and were taken by anglers with snatch tackle in considerable numbers. Time was, also, when shads were so numerous in the Thames, that upon certain occasions the tide would fall quickly and leave them in the holes on the banks by hundreds. Hence, the old English adage: "If hads were shads we should have fish for supper." And time was when a good dish of roach could be taken by an angler on floating timbers, in the winter, at "Execution Dock." But all those times are gone by, never perhaps to return, unless England, like many other mighty nations that have flourished on the earth, should be destroyed and forsaken, and then the finny race might again dwell in their old abodes. Father Thames now, like some imprudent angler, is so noisy, and so full of bustle and disturbance, that salmon will not come near him. Some thirty or forty years ago, roach might be taken, in fine weather, round the piles of the bridges; but now this is not to be done at any time nearer than Battersea and Fulham, where there are several places in which fish may be taken. The fisheries, or preserves, of the Thames are not subscription, as on the Lea, but there are a number of

gentlemen who subscribe a guinea a-year to pay water bailiffs, to preserve the principal places in the water from poachers, netting, &c. They have formed themselves into a society, called "The Thames Angling Preservation Society." And there are other societies that act in concert with them, as "The Society of Friendly Anglers," "The Piscatorial Society," "The United Sons of Walton and Cotton," "The United Society of Anglers," and "The True Waltonians." There are punt-men who live at all the principal places, and punts are let out at so much per day, &c. to anglers. We shall, as with the Lea, just name the places most frequented by anglers, and make any particular observation that may be necessary upon them. The first place is Isleworth; here the water, in the summer, becomes fine and tranquil, and very good fishing is to be obtained in the season, many fine roach and dace, and especially barbel, being taken. It should, indeed, be remarked, that the Thames is renowned chiefly for barbel, and is visited by many anglers who never fish for anything else, and sometimes a very great number are taken by them. The next place is Richmond, where there is every accommodation

for anglers, and where punts may be obtained at 5*s*. per day, and every attendance given. The barbel will, some seasons, come on to feed here as early as June; but the latter end of July and August are decidedly the best times in any season, and at all places in the Thames. We scarcely need say that Richmond is a most lovely spot, and that the scenery around is very delightful. The dace fishing here is excellent. Fine jack, chub, and perch, are also taken. The boatmen here are, Platt, Howard, Brown, and Carter. The next place is Twickenham. Here some trout are to be taken, and a good number of barbel. Opposite Pope's Villa is a famous place for fine chub and heavy barbel. The boatmen here are Coten and son, Chamberlain, Harris, and Hennessey.

We then go on to Teddington, where there is excellent fishing. Some persons prefer this place for barbel to many others in the Thames, and there certainly are great numbers taken here every season, and plenty of all the other finny race. The boatmen here are, Balwin, Deer and son, and Kemp and son. Kingston is the next place, and is spoken of by many anglers as containing

some excellent spots for barbel, and some beautiful swims for roach and dace. Every attention is paid at the Sun to anglers. The boatmen here are, Brown, Clark, and Parnham.

We next come to Thames Ditton, where there is very good fishing, and two good houses — the Crown and Anchor and the Swan — where anglers can obtain every accommodation. At this place, you can not only have punts, but tackle also, if you feel so disposed. The boatmen are, Rogerson, William Tagg, and Henry Tagg. The next we come to is Hampton Court and Hampton, where there is a tumbling bay, and famous barbel fishing. Fine trout are taken here also, and jack and perch, in the season. There are also a number of good houses for accommodation. Benn, Davis, Melbourn, and Snell, are the boatmen at this place. Next we come to Sunbury, then Walton, and then Halliford, which may be all classed together; and there is excellent fishing for barbel, trout, jack, perch, &c. at them all, and boatmen to be found to attend upon you. Then we come to Shepperton Deeps, which contain a number of heavy fish, including very large bream, barbel, jack, and roach, and where there are

punts and boatmen to be obtained as at all the other places we have named. We then pass on to Weybridge, Chertsey, Penton Hook, Staines, &c., and at all these places the angler will find excellent fishing,—at Staines, in particular, where there are a number of boatmen ever ready to oblige. It may be remarked, that the trout fishing is more excellent as you get higher up the water; and the jack fishing is very good. Roach and perch, too, are frequently taken of a very large size, and a great number of barbel. We may mention, also, that at a number of places up the river, the bank fishing becomes very good. In some of the rivers, too, which we have named, which run into the Thames about these places, there is very good fishing for all the different kinds of fish; but it would be useless to lengthen our chapter with a description of them, as it would be in a great measure the same thing over again. We would recommend every angler who wishes to be well acquainted with the Thames, to purchase the map of it, which is sold at the respectable tackle shops in London, and is very beautifully got up and coloured. There is no angling allowed in the Thames during the months of March, April, and May.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DOCKS, AND OTHER PLACES ROUND LONDON.

THE East and West India Docks abound with fish, chiefly roach, bream, and perch. The East Docks are situated at the end of the East India Road, near Blackwall, and the West at the back of Limehouse, near to Poplar. They belong now to one company, named "The East and West India Dock Company." At both places there is an Import dock and an Export dock; and united to the west docks, there is the Blackwall Basin, the City Canal, and the Timber Basin. To fish in any of these an order must be obtained from the Company, signed by the Secretary, or by some clerk for him; and the Company is very kind in giving orders to any respectable person, if he first present at the office, Billiter Square, a letter of recommendation from some

respectable merchant or firm. You must, however, have an order from a Director to fish in the Blackwall Basin, and an order of more weight than the general one to fish in the Import docks. We have fished in them all many times, and had very good sport, taking bream sometimes weighing upwards of three pounds, and thirty or forty pounds' weight of roach at a sitting. In the Blackwall Basin, the fish feed more frequently than in any of the other deep docks; and in the Timber Basin more frequently still, it being more shallow, and not taking so much sun to warm the water, &c. The fishing in the docks, however, is by no means so good as it used to be, and various are the opinions of anglers as to the cause of it. And several times lately the fish have been seen in them in a sickly state, very near the top of the water; and when that is the case they will never feed. Some persons think that, at such times, they have been rendered sickly by some poisonous food that has been thrown into the water by some poaching persons, in order that they may have the opportunity of taking them out. But that is quite a wrong idea, because if it were so, it would only be the

fish that had partaken of the poisonous food that would be sickly, and the others would feed; but it is a well-known fact, that when they have been seen in that state not a single fish would bite, and therefore it must have been something in the whole of the water that affected the whole of the fish; but what that has been could not be really ascertained. The depth of the docks varies according to the quantity of water in them; but, generally speaking, you will require for the Import and Export a line from about sixteen to twenty feet, and for the Timber Basin one about ten feet.

The Blackwall Basin is deep in some places, and shallow in others, so that you must order your line accordingly. If you fish here for perch, you may use the live shrimp, taken in the docks with a small net made for the purpose, which is at times a very killing bait. And your paternoster line may have five or six hooks on it in the deep places, as spoken of in the chapter of Perch-Fishing. Smelts are sometimes taken here in the summer with a paternoster line also, and baiting the hooks with a piece of the smelt. Very fine eels, also, are taken in the Timber Basin in warm weather, by laying a night line baited with a

small fish; and very fine jack are sometimes taken there in the winter. These docks contain some very fine carp and chub, as seen near the top of the water, but they very seldom take the bait. The City Canal is a great deal deeper than the Timber Basin; but as the water runs from one to the other, the fishing in both is much the same. From the jetties in the canal there is good roach fishing, and good perch fishing from the banks. The Commercial Dock at Rotherhithe is well stocked with fish; it contains bream, roach, perch, carp, eels, &c., but the bream are in the greatest abundance, and when they are on the feed, which is in the summer, you may take a great number of them, though generally they run rather small. You must have an order from some person connected with the dock.

The Grand Surrey Canal Dock, near Deptford, is an excellent place for angling; roach, perch, bream, carp, tench, eels, &c. are taken there in great numbers in the summer; and, in the autumn and winter, a good number of jack. It was for a number of years a subscription water, and day-tickets were sold, and a vast number of fish taken; but the fishing has not been so good in it as it used to be, and we

understand that now orders can be obtained gratuitously. The Grand Surrey Canal did extend a good many miles along the country, but it has been done away in great part for the railway, and is now in detached pieces, but still those pieces contain a good number of fish, jack in particular. At Croydon, near the Dartmouth Arms, there is a piece of considerable length, containing a good number of jack, which is free for angling. The Annerley Gardens, in the same locality, have a fine piece of water in them, which contains a vast number of tench, roach, perch, and jack, —tench in particular, which run a very good size, and will feed very freely in the first of the season, before they have spawned. The water is free for anglers who take refreshments at the house, where they can have the best of accommodation. In this water the tench take gentles more freely than any other bait.

Let us now, making our circle round London, go to Hyde Park, where is the Serpentine River, which abounds with fish, bream in particular, and in the summer will afford the angler abundance of sport, if he get into a quiet place and fish it properly, using either gentles or paste for bait. Then there is the

water in the Kensington Gardens, which contains bream, roach, and perch, and where a great number may be taken, if you keep out of sight, and can get other persons to do the same. But let it be borne in mind, that at all such places as these a long rod is very necessary, as the fish will not come very near to the sides; and that is one grand reason why persons do not succeed in these places, and only get small fish. It is not because there are no large fish in them,—for there must be thousands,—but because they cannot be reached, and they are too shy to come near the angler.

The next water worthy of notice is Kingsbury's, which is five miles from Hyde Park Corner, on the Edgeware Road. It abounds with jack and perch, more so than any other piece of water round London. The subscription is 1*l.* 1*s.* a-year, and day-tickets can be purchased on the spot for 2*s.* each. Some two or three years back, a labouring man, who was a good angler, bought a day-ticket, and took as many jack in one day out of this water as he sold for 2*l.*; from which incident we may judge of the number it must still contain.

The Reservoirs at Stoke Newington are well

stored with jack, perch, and roach. In the spring the perch feed there pretty freely, and some of a very large size are taken. A good number of jack are also taken in the season, and it is a pleasant rural place for an angler to spend an hour. But the number allowed the privilege of angling is very limited, there being only so many yearly tickets given to the friends of the directors. This line of conduct they have been forced into, they having received so many applications for orders. The New River runs along the side of the Reservoirs, and in it are to be taken some beautiful roach in the season.

At St. Alban's, in Hertfordshire, there is very good fishing at a place called Two-waters. Here are some fine trout, and jack, roach, dace, perch, &c. There are also some other places in the locality where some very good jack may be taken; and the waters are all free for any respectable angler, and houses are near where he may obtain the best of accommodation.

We may mention next the Reservoir at Cheshunt, belonging to the New River Company, which abounds with jack, perch, roach, &c., and is subject to the same restrictions as those at Stoke Newington. At Amwell,

near Ware, in Hertfordshire, there is a fine piece of water, full of large jack, perch, trout, roach, dace, &c. Only a select number of subscribers is allowed, and the subscription, we are informed, is 2*l.* 2*s.* A few miles nearer London, in the same locality, is the Royden Canal, which is a capital piece of water, well stored with all the different tribes of the scaly race, jack being plentiful, and some very fine roach. It is a water not much known by anglers, or it would doubtless be fished and prized more, and it is quite free for the angler. It comes from Burnt Mills, and unites with the Lea at Royden, and there are several miles of it, beside some small back pieces. By taking a ticket to Royden, on the Eastern Counties Railway, you will be put down close to it. At Snaresbrook, about six miles from London, on the road to Woodford, there is a large pond belonging to the Eagle Inn, in which is a good many jack, perch, eels, &c., and it is free for anglers who put up at the house.

The next water we have to name is the river Roden, in Essex; it rises near Dunmow, and flows through Epping Forest, on to Barking, and runs from thence into the Thames. It

contains roach, dace, perch, &c., and a good number of jack, and is free for angling. At Woodford there are some good haunts for jack; and from thence to Abridge, where a good number of jack are to be taken by a diligent angler.

The last place we have to speak of is Dagenham Breach, which has been long known in the angling world; it is a large piece of water, made at first by the flowing of the Thames through its bank. It is full of fish, among which are roach, perch, carp, tench, jack, eels, and bream in abundance. Some years back the bream used to be taken of a very large size, but of late they have run smaller: there is no place round London where the fish feed more freely than here; and very frequently ten or twelve dozen may be taken in an hour or two. It is a still water, and requires, as hinted before, a long rod, and the angler to keep out of sight. Several changes have been made respecting the subscription to fish in this water, but we believe now tickets for the day can be obtained at the house on the spot, the sign of the Checkers, where every other accommodation can be obtained. Some good jack and perch are taken here in the season, and there will

shortly be a railway that will take you very near to the spot.

Thus we have completed our circuit round London, taking notice of all the waters worth naming within twenty miles. Of course there are many places beyond, where the angler may find very good sport in rivers which we have not named; and that will be the case, more or less, all over the kingdom. Our aim has only been to give the angler—the young one in particular—a knowledge of those waters within his reach; and he must bear in mind that the instructions we have given will answer for all the waters in the country, according to the fish they contain.

CHAPTER XII.

TROUT FISHING.

THE trout is a very beautiful fish, superior to any other of the fresh-water tribe for the table, and affords the angler excellent sport. It is also very shy, and, consequently, it is necessary to use the best of tackle, and employ the finest art to take it.

Trout are found in the greatest numbers near the source of rivers, where the water is cold, clear, and bustling. If they are found at a distance from the source of the river, it is where the river is narrow, and runs over falls, &c., having a crooked and lively course. Their best feeding time is from the beginning of April to the end of June, after which time they seldom take a bait. In the winter they get into the deepest places, or hide in holes in the banks.

They vary in size, from one to twenty pounds, though they are seldom caught above

seven. There are three ways of fishing for trout — with the worm, the minnow, and the fly. When you fish for them with a worm, you may use the same tackle as you would for perch, namely, a strong gut-line, fine at the end, a reed float, a hook varying from No. 5 to No. 8, — according to the size of the fish the water contains,—and a running-line and winch. A red worm of a good size, tough and well scoured in damp moss, or rags, is decidedly the best. The places where they take a worm best, are in eddies, at the end of currents, in tumbling bays, where two streams meet, where the bank of the river has fallen in, or where an old low tree has grown into the river, both roots and branches, and the water is deep, or in any other place where the river and water is in confusion.

Let your worm be well put on your hook, so as to hide it from view, and so adjust your float that your bait shall be very near the bottom of the deepest part of the place where you are fishing, and then it will be frequently on the ground in the more shallow parts, which is where the trout generally take it. Do not give them time, as you would a perch,

but strike as soon as you have a bite, and if the place is dangerous you must not give them an inch of line, but hold them directly under the point of your rod. Be sure you keep out of sight as much as possible. A good plan is to stand away from the place where they are most likely to take the bait, and let your float pass away from you into it, keeping your rod high, and ready to strike with your long line. But that method will only answer in open places. The worm should be used when the day is cold and cloudy, and especially if the water be a little coloured, and the river full. Sometimes, in the first of the season, they will take the worm very close to the bank, for they have only just begun to move about near their winter quarters, and are looking about for food very near home; but as the season advances they will be more and more inclined to sport and feed in the open stream.

When you fish with a minnow, if you use a live one, the same tackle that you use with a worm will do. There are two ways of baiting with it, one by hooking it just below the back fin, and the other by hooking it through both lips. We prefer the

latter, as in that way the minnow lives by far the longest. It should be about a foot from the ground, or more, according to the depth of the place. When you fish with a dead minnow, on a small gorge hook, or an artificial one, you require no float, and every method must be employed to make it show in the water, so as to attract the notice of the trout; for which purpose you must have at the bottom of your line one or two swivels, which will cause the minnow to spin round in the water as you draw it against the stream. This is called spinning the minnow, and it is a very killing way of fishing for trout, if you can but do it without being seen by them. But they are sly fellows, and if they see you at your work you may spin your minnow long enough before you catch one of them. You must hide behind a bush, or prostrate yourself flat on the bank, or get under it, if it be high, and employ every means to keep out of sight. Even the shadow of your rod, if the sun be behind you, and the water is very fine, will sometimes drive them all off, for they have eyes like eagles, and will shoot away from you like darts. A very windy day is the best time to use the minnow, in particular when you spin it.

When you have hooked your fish, wherever he may be, do not give him any more line than you can help, for they are very game, and will drive here and there all over the stream, if you let them, and very frequently get so entangled, if there be bushes or weeds in the way, that you can never get them out, though your hook is fast in them. A good many trout may be taken by a skilful angler in rivers where they abound, by either of these methods of fishing for them. But the most sportsmanlike and pleasant way of taking them is with the artificial fly; and many of our best anglers will never attempt to take one by employing any other means. Fly-fishing for trout is, indeed, taking into consideration the particular construction of the rod, line, and flies, and the superior skill necessary, a department of the art of angling peculiar to itself, and must be well practised before you can well understand it; and it is only one here and there who can really throw a fly well. It is also very fascinating, because you can see the fish take the bait; according to the language of one of our poets—

"'Tis pleasant to see the fish
Cut with golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait."

The rod for fly-fishing must be really good, or you never can throw a fly properly with it. You may purchase one for seven or eight shillings, but it cannot be made upon the proper principle for that sum. It should not, in our opinion, be too long. We have always used a short one ourselves, and we know several other anglers who give the preference to one of that order. When they are long you have not so much command over your fly, and the labour is also greater. It should have a dirk at bottom, so that you can stick it in the ground while attending to your line, &c. The line for fly-fishing should be tapered by degrees to the end, which should not be thicker than the gut which you attach to it. Lines untapered are used, but we do not at all approve of them, being quite sure that they will not cast a fly well. And bear in mind also, that, whatever length of gut you use, that should be tapered likewise. We are aware that some anglers are not thus particular, but we have found by experience that a line thus constructed will give a much greater facility to the falling of the fly on the water. The winch should be a multiplier, not too heavy, with a check-wheel, and, according to our judgment,

fastened on the rod, as near to the bottom as possible, with the handle towards the left hand. The flies to be used are of various sorts, sizes, and colours, to suit the fish, the seasons, the times of the day, and the different waters. Always purchase them where you can depend upon their superior make and construction, bearing in mind that the more they look like the natural fly the better. Obtain a good assortment, and keep them in a pocket-book expressly for the purpose, and take care that they are not damaged before you use them. One of the most common and useful flies to suit all times and places is the dun-coloured, made from the hackle of the cock. But be sure it is a dun-colour, not a red, and let the body be thick. We have killed more fish with this than with any other, and we know some other anglers who have done the same. The next best fly is, in our opinion, that resembling the May-fly, which is black, though we have found that a little colour about the body makes it much more taking, and sometimes we have added a very small gentle to it, which we have found very killing. A very small artificial minnow is also now used in the manner of a fly, and very frequently to great

advantage where the trout are on the open gravelly shallows, during sunny days;—let them sink, and watch for a curve in the water near them, and then strike. Do not have your fly on a hook too small, especially if the trout in the stream run large, for in that case you will be sure to run a chance of missing when you strike. You may, if you please, use two or three flies on your line, at about twenty inches apart, but we do not recommend that plan ourselves, though we know some who adopt it. For you never can throw two or three flies with the same nicety as one; and beside this, if you hook a fish on the nearest hook to you, while you are killing it the other hooks will very likely get entangled in the weeds, and annoy you.

When throwing the fly, always have, if possible, the wind directly at your back. And if one side of the stream contains more fish than the other, as is sometimes the case, manage, if you can, to throw your fly from the opposite side. If you cannot do that, and you must throw from the side where the fish are, keep as far from the water as possible, and do not throw your fly too far over the stream, for your line will be likely to start the fish from the

side. Strike the moment you see the fish rise at your fly, remembering that he does not rise to look at it, but to take it; and if you do not hook him in the instant you will not hook him at all, for in nineteen cases out of every twenty, he detects the deception the moment he takes it in his mouth. We have tried them over and over again, even when they have been strong on the feed, and they will blow the fly out of their mouth immediately they find that there is something fastened to it, in a similar manner to that in which a dog ejects a piece of very hot food, only very much quicker, and away they fly, as though their momentary mistake had terrified them. In a phrenological point of view, they must have the bump of caution very largely developed; and we have sometimes thought it would be well if we were as cautious of subtle snares laid for us while passing along the stream of this mortal life.

Try every place where you can throw your fly conveniently, for when they are after flies, they will take them wherever they are to be found. If the day be very fine, and the sun hot, the sandy shallows will be the most likely places, especially if there be deep holes near them, where they harbour in cold dark days. They

will sometimes take the fly very freely, in shallows around holes, where there is scarcely water enough to cover the dorsal fin; but the greatest caution is necessary in approaching such a place, as well as in throwing the fly on to it. You may throw the fly for trout the whole of the day, but you will generally find the best sport from about six in the morning till twelve at noon, if the day be fine; but if the morning be dark and cold and the evening turn out mild and pleasant, they will then take the fly well, in particular after soft showers have fallen. Be very careful in landing your fish, and never be in a hurry; many hundreds of trout have been lost through being too anxious to bring them to land after they are hooked; never fish again directly in the same place where you have taken a fish, for you may be sure that the work of killing and landing him has frightened all his finny companions away from the spot; and if you lose one in a place the effect will be generally the same.

Never throw your fly on the water in a wet state, for if you do it will sink the moment it gets there, which is not well. To prevent this, whisk it once or twice through the air before you let it fall on the water. And remember that

the grand art is in letting it fall as lightly as possible, so that it shall appear in its descent exactly like a real fly. To accomplish this, you must let the heavy part of your line touch the water first, and then the gut and the fly will go on the water gently; but you can only acquire this by repeated practice, and by using a thick, tapered line, as we have described.

If you kindly gain permission from a gentleman to fish in the water on his domain, and they are strong on the feed, do not take too many, for in that case it is very likely that you will never obtain permission again; and justly, too, for economy is necessary even in catching trout, and waters should never be distressed by greedy anglers. Three or four brace is a very gentlemanly day's sport, and it is very creditable to yourself, your friend, and the water, to say, while they are being admired—"I could have taken a good many more if I had pleased." Mark also, that the finest brace you have in your pannier should always be taken by yourself to the mansion, and their acceptance begged of the nobleman who gave you permission; and upon some occasions they are very much

pleased with them. If you have to choose a day and your time be precious, fix upon one, if possible, when the wind is south, south-west, or south-east, for trout, like all other fishes, will always feed best in such winds. If the wind be cold, you will always find that they feed best on the side of the stream that is sheltered from it, both because they are warmer, and the flies are sure to be there.

And now we do not know that we can say anything more about trout fishing that is really useful. We could say a great deal of another character, but utility is our principal object; we shall, therefore, bring our chapter to a close with two or three lines in rhyme, which may serve to induce a pleasing reflection or two respecting that delightful department of the art.

THE TROUT.

When Spring comes dancing o'er the plain,
With Nymphs and Graces in her train,
And Nature, deck'd with flowers rare,
Begins to show her beauties fair;

Then trout, bold monarchs of the streams,
Enliven'd by the sunny beams,
Steal from their haunts to seek for prey,
And watch the merry flies at play.

And should one in his gambols rude
Upon the trout's domain intrude—

Though but a sportive, harmless fly,
He by the trout is sure to 'die.

'Tis then your arts may tested be,
That Elves and Fays around may see,
Though trout are sly in what they do,
They've not so many wiles as you.

Steal slily, gently towards the stream,
Nor let your shadow on it gleam;
And where you think a trout may lurk,
Propel your fly with graceful jerk.

Then, should he rise, and take your fly—
Before he finds a line is nigh
Your hand must strike the fatal blow,
Or, like a dart, away he'll go.

Should fortune smile, and hook'd he be,
Be calm, and very soon you'll see
How you may venture with your prize,
According to his strength and size.

Your rod hold high, your line keep tight,
And, though he pull with all his might,
He'll find your pliant tackle's sway
Beat all his arts to get away.

Recede—wind in—display your skill,
He must be brought against his will;
For wills, in trout, as well as we,
Must yield sometimes, though proud they be.

And now employ your net to land,
And bring him carefully to hand,
With joy's enthusiastic glow
Which only those who angle know.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANGLING—GENERAL REMARKS ON ANGLERS AND ANGLING.

For a person to be really an angler, he must really have a taste for angling, and must also be of a suitable disposition. A noisy, dashing, changeable, and unreflective person, will never make an angler, at all events not for long; a few minutes, or at most an hour, will be quite enough time for him to spend in such a lifeless, uninteresting pastime, as he would call it. Of course, such a person will never make any proficiency in the art, and never carry home a handsome basket of fish for supper; if he do, they will be some that he has bought already caught for him. But do not let people judge of all anglers by such a person, because there are those who are of quite a different disposition. We never bought a fish in our lives, and never took

home one that we had not caught, and said we had caught it; and we know many of the same cast of mind; we should have no pleasure in any such conduct. The pleasure an angler feels when showing fish, arises from the fact of his having really caught them, and thus having performed, by his skill and perseverance, what many other persons could not. There are others, on the other hand, who will talk of angling as though it were one of the most important and useful sciences in the world, and thereby bring upon them the jeers of all who hear them, especially of those who happen to be extremely short of patience and have not the least relish for fish. And you frequently see this, not only among anglers, but among huntsmen and gun sportsmen, &c. Let it always be remembered that angling is only a recreation, and should only be followed and spoken of as such; we may speak of it as we would of gardening, cricketing, rowing, or any other recreation, and only in that way. There are other persons who have a knack of talking very extravagantly about the places they have been to, the fish they have seen, and those they have caught, &c., and their tongues will magnify everything

they speak of, and especially the fish, with the power of a telescope; any particular fish they have taken will increase in weight more and more every time they speak of it, until it becomes at last quite a monster, and every really sensible person to whom the story is told sees at a glance that it is a downright piece of fudge. All such persons as these, and others that might be mentioned, bring angling and anglers into disrepute. Always tell the truth, in angling as in everything else, and then you will always be believed. The conduct of anglers, as well as that of all other men, will be observed by those around, and will be spoken of according to its merits or faults. That very poetical and sublime definition of angling by Dr. Johnson, viz. that "it was a fool at one end, and a maggot at the other," was called forth, no doubt, by taking notice of a number of some such persons as we have hinted at. But it is not unlikely that the Doctor forgot that anglers might be looked at, and ridiculed by many worse fools than themselves. It must be obvious to all, that many persons attempt to become this, that, and the other, for which they are not at all qualified, and so it is with respect to

anglers; but to designate the whole of a company fools, because there happen to be some fools among them, is very uncharitable and wrong.

Then, as it regards tackle. There are some persons who seem to think that anything will do to fish with; and so long as they have a rod, line, hook, and bait, that will do. And such persons may have a chance, once out of fifty times, to catch a fish or two, should they happen to have a voracious appetite. But any sort of tackle will not do for any time, and for any water. If persons would be really anglers, and would really catch fish, they must have tackle, and it must be the best that they can obtain, or they will soon see themselves put into the shade, if they are fishing near those who have the very best. You cannot be too particular in this respect. For years we tied on all our own hooks, made our own lines, floats, &c.; and we did so because we did not like those made by other persons. But fishing-tackle was not manufactured then as it is now. At some of the best shops in London, it is brought to the highest state of perfection, and exceeds what we could now see to make with eyes nearly half a century old. To

angle as we have described, you must have the rods and lines, and they must be kept in proper order when you have them, or they will soon be spoiled. We have often seen sad muddles in baskets, bags, boxes, and lockers, among the anglers with whom we have come into contact. Every angler should have a sort of cabinet, and everything should be kept in proper order there, so that he can lay his hand on anything and everything he may want at any time. A wise angler studies times, seasons, wind, weather, water, and ways, and will often snatch a few hours, and take a number of fish, when other anglers will miss those favourable opportunities, and waste a good deal of time when they cannot take a fish. If you belong to subscription waters, (and you will not take many fish if you do not,) never leave your case of lines, &c., in your locker, but always put it into your pocket, and look over your lines at home at your leisure, and keep them in proper order. When at the water, if you cannot catch any fish yourself, do not go and stand over the swim of another angler who is catching them, as, by so doing, you will, if the water be very fine, render him as unsuccessful as yourself. Neither go and fish as near to

him as possible, as though you thought he had around him all the fish in the water; for such conduct always looks weak and mean, and you will not, in nineteen cases out of every twenty, reap any benefit from it. As already mentioned, be sure you keep your shadow off the water. You need not, however, be afraid of making a noise, or shaking the ground, for it is a perfectly mistaken notion that fish are affected by it. We have proved it, by looking through the sedges at them, and bawling with all our might, while others did the same. We have also watched them while part of an old stand was lifted up and let fall with the greatest force on the bank, but in both cases the fish were perfectly still. Do not go too long without food, nor sit down long in wet clothes, nor be ashamed to put on a good thick great-coat, a warm cap, a pair of overalls, and a thick pair of clogs, or to sit in a shower beneath a very large umbrella. All these are very comfortable things, and are not to be despised, though some novices do not think of them and enjoy them. But we speak from experience.

And now, to conclude, we will only say we wish all our friends health to fish, happiness

while fishing, and a handsome basket of fish when they are done. And, just to show them the difference between good anglers and bad, we have selected from a number we have in manuscript, the following story, which we doubt not will please them.

THE THREE JOLLY ANGLERS.

In one of the courts out of the number found in the great city of London, lived Mr. Barnaby Bigings. We need not state the name of the court, nor the exact locality in which it was situated, for it is of little consequence as to whether it was Lion Court or Lamb Court. Suffice it to say that it was a court, and Mr. Bigings lived in it, and was contemplated by the neighbours as a very important man; for upon certain occasions he wore a hat and coat with gold lace on them, and had to do with very important personages and very important things, and to behold very wonderful performances. He was also a very wise man—at least in his own estimation; and if you wanted to hear stories told of a mysterious character, or obtain information respecting miraculous deeds, he was the very man to interest you, especially if you cheered his spirits with spirits of another order, and charged his glass as fast as he *dis*charged the

contents of it. And he would make his relations and give his opinions with a good deal of air and emphasis, evidently contemplating himself as a person of vast importance. And you will not wonder at all this, when we tell you that he was no less a person than the beadle of a Roman Catholic chapel. And he had to take great care of splendid robes, massive candlesticks, very thick and long wax candles, little tinkling bells, spice with which to burn sweet odours, relics of the saints, holy oil, and a variety of other holy and mysterious things. It was his duty, moreover, to show timid and bashful young women into confessional boxes, or to chastise little dirty Irish boys if they did not behave themselves, and to fetch the water to be made holy by a wonderful transformation. And was he an angler, you say? No, he was not; but we will tell you how he became one,—such a one as he made.

In his neighbourhood lived an aged couple who had seen better days, but misfortune had brought poverty and affliction upon them at a time when they were the least able to bear it. Long had they struggled against biting want, and had parted with almost every article they had to buy food, to keep body and soul toge-

ther. And among other things, they had sold to Mr. Bigings an old copy of Isaac Walton's book on angling, the old man telling him that it was one of the most interesting books he had ever read, and that he had many times in his younger and better days enjoyed the pleasures of that most delightful sport, which was so much loved by the writer, who must have been, in his opinion, one of the best and happiest men that ever lived; and if he had his life to come over again, he should often trudge to the side of some gently flowing stream, to enjoy an hour of that pleasure which no one but an angler could experience. And while the old man uttered the words, the big tears rolled down his pale and furrowed cheeks, plainly indicating the sincerity of his heart. Bigings was not much of an enthusiast, and though between fifty and sixty years had rolled over him, had never enjoyed one moment of any such pleasure as the old angler seemed to describe to him; his pleasure had only been in eating and drinking, smoking or sleeping; still, as he thought the old man was sincere, and that he himself should like to taste the pleasures, the loss of which he so much regretted, he began to read the book.

He had not gone far among its pages before his views of angling were very much changed. He had hitherto been of opinion that it was a silly and boyish pastime, one in which any simpleton might engage, and the art of which might be learnt in about five minutes; but he was now convinced that he had been labouring under a great mistake. Many people think many arts very easy until they attempt to acquire a knowledge of them, and thus it is with the art of angling. Any person can stand by the side of a river, and hold the rod and line in his hand, and throw the baited hook into the water; but to bring the fish out of the water with them is quite another thing. A novice, too, may perchance catch one or two little, silly, hungry fish; but to fill a basket with some of the best the river contains is the work only of a master of the art.

But Mr. Bigings had had no experience, and therefore did not understand these distinctions, and being, as we have said, a man of an excellent opinion of his own abilities, he thought that if he were only to go angling, he could catch trout, jack, chub, roach, and dace with the greatest ease, only by adopting the means which Isaac Walton described, forgetting that

there is a wonderful difference between theory and practice, talking or reading, and doing; he therefore was bent on becoming an angler. And he began to please his good wife with the thoughts of having trout for supper, and she absolutely looked into their old cookery-book to see how they were to be dressed, and while she was reading the directions, he could not help smacking his lips, for his mouth really watered, as he was remarkably fond of fish, which was not surprising, seeing that he was a Roman Catholic, and a bit of fish was all he dare eat for days and weeks together.

It may, however, be remarked, that he had not been a Roman Catholic all the former part of his life; but he had been into their chapel, gazed on their splendid paintings, their lighted up altar-piece, their gorgeous array, listened to their mystic intonations, their harmonic singing, their pealing organ, and, like ten thousand other weak-minded and superstitious ones, he had become quite infatuated with them, though he knew no more about the doctrines of Romanism than a donkey knows about the science of botany. And, with all due respect to Rōman Catholics, we cannot help thinking, and saying, that we are of

opinion that they must all be in a similar state of ignorance, or they never could tolerate a system of religion so full of follies, errors, absurdities and abominations.

The favourite fish of Mrs. Bigings was salmon, but her spouse assured her that a really good trout of five or six pounds was to be preferred, and he was quite sure that she would be convinced of it when he brought two or three brace home. And under such circumstances, if they did not make presents of any of them to their friends, the best plan would be to boil them all and sup off them, and then pickle the rest; and he'd not the least doubt that it would be very far superior to the finest Newcastle salmon in the world.

And then as to jack, and carp, and chub, and all the other fresh-water fish, though some people did say they cared nothing about them, he believed it was only because they could not get them, and he'd wager that if they had a dish of them nicely cooked, they'd pretty soon begin to clear some of their bones, especially if they had been fasting for two or three days previous. And if even the priest declared that they should not have a single modicum of fat to fry them in, he'd warrant they'd go

down sweet. But for his part, he would never obey orders so strictly as all that, for he liked fish fried in plenty of fat, and a good rich gravy with them into the bargain, and he would have it too when he could get it, for he knew for certain that Father Munch, after all his talk to the people about the blessedness of fasting, often ate on the sly all manner of good rich things at fasting times, for he hadn't been into his kitchen so often to learn nothing. And thus they went on talking about fish, fat, and savoury gravy until Mrs. Bigings almost imagined she could smell the delicious effluvia flying off from them. And it was well that her husband's eloquence upon the eating part of the pleasure was good, because it pleased her, and reconciled her to his going to catch the fish. She knew that he was fond of a little drop, as he termed it, though it sometimes amounted to a large drop, or a number of large drops; and then, like many other people, he was troubled with a violent swimming in his head, and could hardly tell what he was about. And Father Ganza had found him two or three times the worse for liquor, as people call it, at the chapel; and upon one occasion, liquor the worse for him, for he had

fallen plump on two or three dozen of wine that had just come in, and sent both glass and liquid flying in all directions. And at other times he had, through his drunken stupidity, done several things which were even of a very sacrilegious character, though it was not known by the devoted Roman Catholics who attended the chapel. As, for instance, one day, while dusting the relics of the saints, he let fall the tumbler out of which Saint Sips always used to drink his water, and because it should not be known, picked up every modicum of the pieces, and bought another tumbler as much like it as possible, and put it in its place. And then, when devout Roman Catholics were looking with holy reverence at the tumbler, or touching it, or kissing it, thinking all the while it was the holy tumbler of Saint Sips, it was no such thing, but a common one bought for a few pence out of an English china-shop.

But we must give Bigings his due, for he did feel very queer about the affair, and prayed to the Virgin to keep him from getting so stupidly drunk. And he told his wife, but no one else, that he knew it was a judgment on him for his unholy conduct, for there was

something very mysterious about it, and he could not tell how the glass went out of his hand; he only knew that it did go, and was dashed to atoms, and when the alarm at what he had done had brought him to a little, he found to his utter dismay that instead of dusting the holy glass with his duster, he had absolutely been using the nightcap of Saint Soak, which was considered by some the most sacred relic in the chest. He could hardly tell how it was, but he sometimes thought that the relic of Saint Soak did not agree with the relic of Saint Sips; beside which, the saint did not like to see his nightcap turned into a duster, and consequently, the utter destruction of the tumbler was the consequence.

Now, all this had happened through the tippling propensity of Bigings, and though it was not all found out, yet out of his place he would have gone, only he was considered by the priests, and spoken of by them, as a proselyte to their holy religion. It must, therefore, be seen very clearly that angling was rather a dangerous amusement for him. And his wife knew this, and she thought that if he should get topheavy while he was fishing, it was quite as likely that he might tumble into

the water to the fish, as that they might be brought out of the water to him; and then, what would become of him? especially if no one should be there to pull him out, for he was a stout heavy man, and could not get out himself. Then instead of having fish brought home for supper, it would be the awful news that he was drowned. These melancholy reflections had found their way into her mind, and she had partly revealed them to Bigings; but he only laughed at her, and told her that she was like all other women who loved their husbands, always thinking all manner of frightful things about them if they were a few miles away from home. And he assured her that, when a boy, he could swim like a fish himself, and had often been thrashed by his schoolmaster in the summer time, for diving into a neighbouring pond, instead of into the elements of Walkingame's Tutor, or those of his mother tongue; and he had no doubt that if he were put to it he could swim as well as ever. That might be, his wife said, but it was the particular swimming in his head that she feared, for, be it-said to her praise, she did not like to accuse him plainly of drunkenness. But it now became a matter of concern with

Bigings how he should get the tackle necessary to angle with. The book he had bought of the old man cheap enough; and he asked him if he had any tackle by him, but he said he had been obliged to part with that before he sold him the book. Bigings then asked him what he thought it would cost to equip himself, so as to be able to bring home five or six good trout? The old man gave him a very significant look, and shaking his head, said, "It is not so easy, Mr. Bigings, to get five or six good trout; and to get the tackle necessary to catch them would, I think, cost more than you would like to spend. And even then you could not buy the skill, if you would give ever so much for it." He then told him what tackle he ought to have, what it would cost, the trouble it would be to obtain permission to fish in a good trout stream, and the times best to catch them; and all these things combined made such a formidable affair of trout fishing, that Bigings looked rather downcast about it, and said, "Oh, then I think I must give up the thought of trout." Still he was determined to be an angler, and to catch something; he therefore asked the old man what was the next good

fish that might be caught, and that with less expensive tackle and less trouble also. He told him that jack was a good fish, and might be caught with tackle of a commoner order, the whole of which he might buy for a few shillings. They were also, he said, a very voracious fish, and would take at times almost anything. His hook should be baited with a small fish, or, if he could not get that, he might use a frog. He had read of one that seized a mule by the nose while he was drinking in the stream, and held him so tight that the mule threw him out on the land, glad enough to get rid of him anywhere. Others had been opened that had swallowed young ducks and rats, and they had been known to try to pouch a fish nearly as large as themselves. "Then they are the chaps for me," said Bigings, "and I'll buy the tackle, and have a try for some *on 'em*. And if I can't get one thing for a bait, I'll get another, and I'll warrant it shall be something worth their swallowing." And he was going away, but he turned back and asked the old angler if he thought they'd take a nice piece of raw beef steak, or the inside lean of a mutton chop, or a little slice of cold roast pork? But the old man,

with a rather sarcastic smile on his countenance, said he had never heard of any such baits being used, but he might try them if he pleased, and there could be no harm done. "Very good," said Bigings, and off he went full of determination and expectation. A rod and winch, line and hook, float and basket, he bought at the cheapest possible rate, and took them home, telling his good wife that they cost several shillings less than they really did. But it was only what he called a white lie, to keep her from grumbling at the expense. And beside, as a Roman Catholic, he was taught to discriminate between vernal, venal, and penal sins, and he thought there was nothing like trying to keep things pleasant and comfortable, especially with the ladies. His wife said she thought they were all remarkably cheap; and she wondered how they could be made for the money, for when her brother bought some such things a few years back they were very much dearer. But he rejoined, "You know, my dear, that I always *lays* out my money to the very *best possible* advantage." He then pleased her by describing how they were to be used, and showed her what a famous length the rod was, and

how strong and sharp was the hook; and read to her what Isaac Walton said about catching jack and pike, telling her at the same time that he had been obliged to give up the thoughts of catching trout, because the tackle for that purpose would have cost much more money. He added also that he thought she might soon fancy a new bonnet, or a gown, and therefore he would keep the money in reserve for that purpose. He had some knowledge of womankind, and had found by experience that five kind words would do more to pacify a woman than five thousand of an opposite character; he always carried his cause by kindness, not by storm. Still, his wife was not at rest respecting his angling excursion; she could not get the thoughts of his tumbling into the water out of her head; but said she should not care so much if some others were going with him.

Mr. Bigings had at first conceived the idea of going by himself, and that for two reasons; one, because he thought there would be no one with him to see his blunders; and the other, because he should be more like Isaac Walton, who was so fond of being by himself, and enjoying his own thoughts. But he did not

wish his wife to be unhappy while he was taking his pleasure, and therefore he resolved to have a companion. But then, who was that companion to be? He did not want it noised abroad that he went a fishing, for many ignorant people would laugh at him, as he would have laughed at any one else, before he read Isaac Walton. It should be some one with whom he was familiar, yet he should not be familiar with many others. Who should it be? He could hardly tell.

At length he pitched upon his next-door neighbour, Mr. Samuel Stickings, the shoemaker, who, taking him altogether, he thought would answer his purpose, because he did not come in contact with any of his cronies. There were, indeed, some things respecting him that he did not much like, but he thought he would over-rule the objections he had to them for convenience sake. Stickings professed to be a teetotaller, and he did not like that, and it was not to be supposed he would, when he was so fond of tippling, and therefore they always disagreed upon that point. Yet, if they had both been really prudent men, there would have been no disagreement between them; they both went to the extreme.

If Mr. Bigings had left off drinking too much beer, and Mr. Stickings had left off drinking too much tea, they would have been good friends immediately. He was a ranter, too, and Mr. Bigings did not like that; and how could it be expected he would, when he belonged to a church, and obtained his living by it, where no such thing as ranting is allowed. Ranting, indeed! why, the priests themselves, generally speaking, only mutter what they say in Latin. Ranting! Just imagine half-a-dozen ranters, with flaming zeal and lusty lungs, in the middle of a Roman Catholic chapel! why, they'd terrify the whole congregation, and all the priests into the bargain, and not unlikely send some of the maidenly nuns into hysterics.

But these objections to Mr. Stickings, and many others, Mr. Bigings waived, for, as he told his wife, "when you come to give it a thought in a reasonable manner, why should people be so full of prejudice one against the other, about things which were, after all, of little or no consequence to them?" Why could not next-door neighbours stand by the side of a river and pull out *jacks and pikes* in company with one another without quarrelling

about religion? Stickings had said that the pope, the cardinals, bishops, monks, and priests were all a set of hypocrites and deceivers together; that there was no more *infaldibility* in them and their church than there was in the Black Bear, and all the sots and tipplers who went there; but for his part he did not rightly know what *infaldibility* meant, and he did not think that Stickings did. He had said that he would as soon pray to his great grandmother as to the Virgin Mary, for he thought she had just as much power to hear him; but then, it was only just a matter of opinion after all. He had said that holy water was not a morsel better than any other water; but if other people thought it was, why, let them think so, and cross their foreheads and touch their breasts with it, and imagine that they were very much the better for it. He had said that he thought it was a very strange piece of conduct for priests and people at high mass all to fall down and worship a little baked flour and water; but Roman Catholics did not think so, for they kept on doing it, whatever other people said or thought about it.

He had said, that having religious houses

for unmarried priests, and others for unmarried nuns, and permitting them to have communication one with the other, looked to him a rather strange and suspicious affair, especially when some of the nuns were such lovely creatures; but the Church of Rome allowed it, and Roman Catholics did not mind it, and young girls were infatuated with it. He had said that teaching people to confess was only a sly contrivance to draw out of them all their secrets; but if people had a mind to tell their secrets, what was that to any one else? He had said that the wax-candles, flowers, incense, bells, alarums, the red and yellow robes, the large gold mitre, the bowings, kneelings, turnings, walkings, and all the rest of the doings in the Roman worship, were nothing better than a pantomime, and were only fit to please a set of boys and girls and old women; but there were a goodly number of other persons besides old women and children who seemed to like it for all that. He had said that purgatory was only an invention to get the money out of people's pockets, for praying their relations out of it; but if people liked to give the priests the money, what was that

to any one else, and what fools they'd be if they did not pocket it!

Now all these things, and many others, Stickings had said, but he must overlook it, for he wanted a companion to go with him, and therefore he should make use of him. But then he was not an angler, and he thought he would not like to go and stand so long by the water-side unless he had something to do; so he thought he would make an angler of him, and to accomplish that he would lend him Isaac Walton's book to read. He did so, and showed him his tackle, and dilated on the pleasures and profits to be derived from the sport with all the eloquence he possessed. But he found that Stickings was not so easily enamoured with angling arts and anticipation as he had been, neither had he any money to spend in the purchase of tackle as he had: he obtained his living by the sweat of his brow, a way the most honourable, and every hour of his time was precious; besides which, he had some children to keep, and a wife who was not to be won over to the spending of time and money in sports and holidays so easily as Mrs. Bigings.

Still the beadle plied his arts to bring him over to his way of thinking and feeling, and he at last succeeded to some extent, so that Stickings agreed to go with him for a day's sport on some Monday, which was an idle day. He bought, moreover, for the purpose a bamboo-cane, about fourteen feet long, and put some old curtain-rings on it, making it like a rod, and for a line a small ball of fine cord and a good large jack-hook, and converted a bung into a float.

But Bigings did not like the idea of travelling with a companion who would have to carry his rod at full length all the way from home to the water side; it had rather too much hardihood about it. His love for Isaac Walton, and for the sport that Isaac Walton loved, was not strong enough to bear him up against such a torrent of looks, smiles and jeers, as he knew they should have to encounter as they went along; for people will trouble their heads with what does not concern them. So he suggested to Stickings the propriety of having the bamboo cut into four pieces, and having it ferruled, and then it would make a proper rod, and he would pay the expense. This was done accordingly

by a brazier, and Mrs. Bigings, moreover, made a canvas bag to put it in. Stickings was pleased with his rod and their kindness, and began to have a better opinion of Roman Catholics than ever. But he did not know that it was all because Mrs. B. did not like her spouse to go a-fishing by himself.

But most men, all through life, have some sorrows to counterbalance their pleasures, and so it was with Stickings. His spouse did not want him to go at all, and, like many more of her sex, she had a tongue that was rather too long, and she brought it to bear upon her lord and master, and let fly such a volley of loquacity into his listening organs, that he began to wish Isaac Walton's book, the beadle, the rods and lines, the fish, the rivers, and all the rest of the paraphernalia anywhere but near him. And he felt confident, that if Isaac Walton had had such a wife as his, he never would have lived in such a peaceful frame of mind, or wrote such a book upon angling. In fact, his wife had never opposed him so much in anything before, not even when he went to the Chartist Meetings, and he could not tell what to make of it. At length when she got round a little, he found that she vented her spite against *Mrs. Bigings* and the *bag* she

made for the rod, more than against anything else. "She was quite sure," she said, "that she could have made a much better bag herself, for the work in it was *horrorble*, and it was not made in the right form; and any one but a fool might see that the stuff too was as coarse as a hopsack, and could not have cost above *three-ha'pence*, and if she had been going to give away anything, it should have been something better than that." But the truth was, the green-eyed monster was raging within her gentle bosom; she was jealous of Mrs. Bigings's kindness, not knowing her motive for it. How foolish many weak-minded women are! how jealous, frequently, without any reason! And the moment they are so, they just employ the very worst means to accomplish their end. They want the whole of the love of the object of their affection, but they scold and threaten, rant and rave, and do everything and anything that is calculated to weaken his regard. They want him to have no regard for the object of their jealousy, yet if she be in their power, they will persecute and torture her upon every possible occasion, so that if the man never had one atom of regard for her in his life, he must feel some sympathy for her, seeing that for his sake she is thus made to suffer. It is thus

that many a jealous woman, though without any cause, has brought the keenest sorrows upon herself for life. But Stickings, as soon as he found out what was amiss, laughed at his wife so much about Mrs. Bigings, that she soon became cured of her jealous fit.

All things were now ready for the sport, as it regarded Bigings and Stickings, and they only had to fix on a Monday to go, and a water to go to. But there was plenty of time as it regarded the season, for the old angler told Mr. Bigings that jack were not considered really in condition till September or October. And it so happened, that while they were making up their minds about the excursion, Stickings lent the book on angling to one of his relations, Romeo Rigings, a tailor, thinking that he should like him to go with them, if he were so minded, for he was not over and above partial to the company of the beadle.

Rigings was very much pleased with the book, and also with the thought of having a day at the sport, and very soon equipped himself for it, following the line of conduct that Stickings had pursued under the direction of Bigings; and the shoemaker having mentioned to the man of office that his friend wished to

accompany them, he said he was agreeable; still he would rather have been without his company than with it, for he did not like him even so well as he did the shoemaker.

He was a person of rather radical principles and of considerable consequence, though a very little man, and had been, in his younger days, very fond of the stage, and would even now, if he had a little more beer than usual, give recitations or a soliloquy with the greatest emphasis and attitude. He also thought himself a bit of a poet, and would occasionally compose a song, or give an extemporary piece of blank verse. But all this sort of conduct had not many charms for Mr. Bigings; he was advanced in life, and was of a more staid and settled character; he was, however, disposed to make all things agreeable, and his wife was very pleased to think that he would have company, so that if his head should swim, and he should tumble into the water, he would have some persons near to pull him out.

It was not long before they fixed upon the day and the place, and they all agreed to go to Old Father Thames, where the gentle and peaceful Isaac had so often plied his arts among the finny tribes.

"And who knows," said Bigings, "but we may *set* upon the very same bank, and in the very same place, and pull out fish from the very same hole as that good man did!"

And then he gave a sigh, and Stickings said, "It is not unlikely that we may!" and Rigings jumped up, for they were sitting in Bigings's house, and putting his left hand into his bosom, and extending his right in theatrical gesture, and with a countenance quite as tragical as melancholy, exclaimed,—

"And thus in the spot
Where Walton once *cot*
The fish with his rod and his line,
I'll do what I can,
Though a *wery* small man,
To pull out some fishes with mine!"

And he sat down. "Bravo!" said Stickings, but Bigings said nothing, only looked at his wife, who had never seen Rigings before, and therefore was staring at him with mighty surprise, thinking what a strange being he was. Indeed, she was literally frightened when she saw him get up to speak, for she wondered what he was after, and thought he was going to browbeat her about something, though when she had heard what he said, and saw that he sat down and composed himself, she could

hardly keep from laughing outright. But Rigings thought he had done wonders.

All was now settled but the time of starting. Rigings was for going by the boat, and Stickings was for walking, to save expense, and Bigings was for walking also, though not to save expense, but because he wished to keep the excursion as secret as possible. He therefore told them to bear in mind what Walton said about early rising and the dawn of day, and the first part of it being the best time for the fish to feed. And he suggested that they should all walk in old-fashioned style, and start about three o'clock, so that they might get ten or twelve miles out by six. He did this because he knew that very few of the neighbours, if any, would be up at that time, and they should get clean away from town long before daylight, and therefore would not be seen. They agreed to the proposal of Bigings, and met at the appointed time, and off they went, leaving their wives to prolong their slumbers until Phœbus should bring on the day. The morning was dark, the clouds low, and the murmuring sound of the atmosphere on the ear seemed to prognosticate anything but a fine day. Onward they prosecuted their journey, the police here and there scrutinising

them from top to toe, and sometimes bringing all the power of the bull's eye lantern to bear upon them; but as soon as they saw the rod on their shoulders, and the basket at their backs, they desisted, for the tale was told,—they were anglers. It was not daylight until they had got away from busy London, though they could perceive it in the distance with its spires and smoke, which seem to tell what a mighty mass of human-kind there is beneath them, what cares and joys, pleasures and pains, crimes and virtues, are there.

But our travellers were thinking about other things; jack and pike were the principal, no doubt, but there were others which now began to be busy in their brains. Bigings began to think that he should like his breakfast, for he was always in the habit of having it directly he got up, and sometimes his good wife indulged him with it in bed, if she were up early and he said he was tired, as was the case sometimes on a Monday morning. There was, therefore, no agreement between this Monday morning and those that had gone by, and his stomach did not like the change at all, for it murmured and grumbled tremendously, making a noise something like thunder at a distance; and he told

his companions that he should like to stop and have something soon. Stickings, who generally had a pretty good appetite, said he never felt so hungry in all his life, and he was quite sure that he could eat half a quartern loaf and a pound of cheese with the greatest pleasure. Rigings said he was not so hungry as all that, still he should like his breakfast, for he felt rather hollow, something like he used to feel after he had played the character of Macbeth or Othello. They therefore turned into a coffee-shop which they found open on their way, where they made rolls and butter, eggs and coffee, vanish like vapours before the sunbeams. And Bigings, who had some beef steaks in his basket, a piece of which he intended to try if the hungry jack would take, got the coffee seller to cook some for them, and they all declared that never in their whole lives did they taste such a fine piece of steak; it certainly was splendid!

Having satisfied the cravings of the appetite and the gnawings of the stomach, they paid the reckoning, and as there was no time to be lost, they turned out and proceeded on their journey with countenances much more placid than when they turned in. They were, however, a rather

strange-looking triplet, now that the full daylight showed them in all their dimensions. Bigings, as already hinted, was a corpulent man, of about five feet seven, with only one eye, (poor man!) and a nose very large and red at the end, and a chin which seemed to have a very strong inclination to grow up to it. He wore top-boots and inexpressibles, with a broad-brimmed hat, and one of his official great-coats with the cape and gold lace taken off. In his gait he held his head erect, and took rather long and sure steps, as though he had a desire to keep up his dignity and make the most of himself.

Stickings, with the exception of his height, was the very reverse of Bigings; he was thin and straight, all down alike, with lantern jaws, and quite a small nose, the end of which seemed as though it had been pinched as close as possible. His eyes were small, dark, and piercing, his hair black, and complexion pale; and no one, to look at him, would have thought that he had had such a breakfast as he had just devoured in the coffee-house, for his whole appearance was exceedingly meagre. His dress, too, was not at all calculated to improve his lean frame: he wore a pair of drill trousers that were five

or six inches too short, and withal quite tight round his legs; with a very old black coat and waistcoat, that any one might see were never made for him, for they were a good deal too small and of very old-fashioned cut. He had, however, a tremendously large cravat, and a pair of whiskers that would have made a hundred of those worn by beardless youths who are very persevering in the use of the grease of the bear, or Rowland's Macassar; and, to crown all, his hat was drab, with a very small brim, very much out of shape.

Rigings was quite a little man, not five feet in height, ill shaped, with a large head and face, hard features, and his beard cut in a particular way, plainly indicating that he thought himself a person of some importance, and wished other persons to think the same. But his dress was more suitable for the occasion than that of either of his companions; for he wore a sporting coat with very large pockets, and a wide-awake, which, when he was going to spout, he would bend sometimes into the shape of a cocked hat worn in the army, which made him look very ludicrous.

Such being their appearance, it will not appear wonderful that people should look at them

as they strolled along the road, and that the vulgar should throw out a jeer or two as to the sport in which, they could see by what they carried, they were going to engage. But Rigings always had an answer for them all, for he gave them, according to his own way of expressing it, quite as good as they sent, and sometimes a little better. But every fresh insulter knew not of the retaliation he had made on the last who insulted him, and therefore they were not deterred by his witty sarcasms, which were sometimes exceedingly cutting, and not at all relished by those who had to bear them. But, as he remarked, they had no right to insult him, and if they had not he should not have made remarks upon them. The fact was, he was very fond of hearing his own speech, and, consequently, put his tongue into motion whenever he could find an opportunity.

This was the objection Bigings had to him, but upon this occasion he made him laugh so much every now and then that he could hardly walk along the road. They had also been into two or three places for a drop of something short, as the morning was cold and damp; and even Stickings, though a

teetotaller, had been prevailed upon to take a dram by way of remedy, so that the liquid spirits operating on the ghostly, they had become quite light-hearted and merry, and disposed for other sports as well as that of angling.

Rigings would wear his wide-awake in the form we have mentioned, and not only so, but he had begged two pins of an old woman, and absolutely pinned the sides together, and stuck the feather of a cock's tail, which he picked up, in the front of it, and to all who took any particular notice of him he made obeisance of some kind or other. A recruiting sergeant and his men commenced an attack on him, but he poured in such a volley of sarcastic abuse that they were soon glad to retreat; and he finished it with an extemporary effusion, which he gave in the middle of the road, in style truly theatrical, and though it was wild and laughable, it contained some remarks that were by far too true. It ran thus—

"Avaunt! ye minions of satanic ire,
With coats the colour of the blood ye spill,
And trimmings white and pallid as the flesh ye make,
With swords of steel as cruel as your hands,
And bullets in your pouches, hard as are your hearts;
With money in your pockets, little, as must be your souls,

Or never would ye follow such a calling.
Ye tools of tyrants' towering pride, avaunt!
Nor let me e'er thine ugly faces, dress, or weapons see.
Go to, and from thy caps those floating ribbons take,
Nor dare another soldier while I live to make!
We peaceful go to kill jacks for our dinners,
But you, the sons of Adam—O, you monstrous sinners!

The soldiers listened attentively to this, and then set up a shout and passed on, and very soon they were out of the sight of each other. Our travellers had not gone far from this spot before they came to a pot-house, on the road-side, where a party of holiday-makers had been carousing all night, and their dissipation and excesses had made them wretched specimens of human nature. Some were sleeping, others yawning, and all seemed weary with their own depraved doings.

Rigings was just the person for them to see and to make sport of, and as he and his companions stopped to have a drop of heavy wet to quench their thirst, there was a display of jargon and jokes, in which the odds were very much in favour of Rigings.

"Who the dickings are you?" said a fellow who was lolling on the table with both arms, his eyes half shut, and his face woefully long.

"I'm his Majesty the King of Slang," said

Rigings, "and I rule my kingdom with the power of my tongue, and command or punish *who* I please."

"You're a devilish droll fellow," was the reply.

"I'm not devilish," said he; "those are devilish who get drunk by swallowing liquid fire.

'Who spend their pelf to bouse all night,
And snore like pigs at morning light.'"

"What!" said the fellow, "then you mean to say I'm devilish?"

"I did not say you was," said Rigings.

"But you meant it, Sir," said he, opening his eyes, rising in a towering passion, and shaking his fist.

But Rigings was not at all daunted, for, lifting his mock cocked hat a little off his face, throwing himself into a pompous attitude, and making his countenance as terrific as possible, he exclaimed, with his eyes sternly fixed on him:—

"Thy guilty conscience tells thee plainly, thou
A drunkard art, and also, that thy throat,
In dead of night, will gulp the liquor down,
And therefore, when the trite remark was made,
It fitted, like thy nightcap to thy muddled brains.

O man, thy week so ill begun may sadly end!
Thy money gone, how mayst thou wish 'twere thine!
Thine health impair'd, how mayst thou wish thee well!
O man! O man! to think, to home, to work, I say!"

And out he went after his companions. The fellow, whom he had been addressing, for some seconds stood like one panic-stricken, for he, as well as all in the room, knew not what to make of Rigings; they were afraid of him. But he soon sat down, saying to those around him, "There's a pretty scoundrel to insult a man to his face like *that ere;* he ought to be kicked."

But he did not offer to go after him, for he had had enough of him already, being quite chagrined before all present.

Onward went the anglers, and soon saw in the distance the silvery winding stream; and as they all began to feel the distance they had come, they were as anxious to rest themselves on its banks, as to ply their arts to catch jack and pike. They knew nothing of the water, or of the particular spots likely to contain jack, and therefore one part did as well for them as another. The rain, too, had fallen already in light showers, and to all appearance would increase, and consequently Mr. Bigings suggested the propriety of being

near a house, where they might take shelter if they needed it, "for," as he remarked, "we had better get a little too wet inside than a good deal too wet out."

A real angler never minds a shower, he always goes prepared for it; but a novice, or one who, like a butterfly, only goes out when the summer sun shines, will, like the butterfly, drive in anywhere to keep dry wings.

They had not walked far on the bank of the river before they saw some gents already at angling, in a punt on the other side of the stream. They were barbel fishing, and as the wind, tide, and water were all favourable, and they were clever hands at the sport, they were pulling out the fish in good style.

This our heroes perceived, and they sat down on the bank, looking at them for some time; and as the sport was all new to them, they had rather a strange conversation among themselves respecting them. They wondered what baits they were using, and what fish they were catching.

"How they lug 'em out!" said Bigings.

"They do, indeed," said Stickings.

"Hi! hi!" said Rigings, "they understand all about it; they're old stagers, we must look

at them and learn. What kind of fish do you think they are, Mr. Bigings?"

"Why, they look to me," said Bigings, "very much like small cod, or haddocks."

"But I always thought they *was coutch* in the sea, in salt water," said Stickings.

"They may *citch* 'em there in nets," said Bigings, "but *this 'ere* river you see joins the sea, and who knows but they may take a stroll up here for the sake of a little fresh water?" *

"And what kind of bait have they got on the hook?" said Stickings.

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Bigings; "its very white, and looks to me very much like a small piece of a thin candle, or a bit of fat pork."†

"No," said Rigings, whose eyes were very good, "it looks to me more like a piece of gristle, or *paddewack*."

And thus they went on cogitating, beholding every now and then a barbel taken by some one of the anglers who were in the punt. At length Bigings said, "Well, it's no use to *set* looking at them; if we want fish ourselves,

* Barbel have very much the appearance of codlings or haddocks at a distance.

† Graves would have that appearance on the other side of the river.

we must *citch* 'em, and as we can see there's plenty *on* 'em in the water, and we've got a house here close behind where we can go in if it rains, and have anything we like, I think we may as well have a try here."

"Very well," said Stickings.

"With all my heart," said Rigings, "and who knows but what we may pull 'em out as fast as they do!"

"No," said Bigings, "I don't think we shall *citch* like what they're *citching*, because our tackle won't do; we must fish for jack. But if I'd *er* thought *on* it before I come out, I'd *er* read what Walton says about all the different kinds of fish in the Thames, and the right sort of baits for 'em; only people never think of things till it's too late. But I think what they're *citching* are not jack, by the colour on 'em."

They now began to pull out their rods and lines, and to put them together, and when they had done so it became a matter of concern what they were to put on their hooks. They had no small fish, and no means of getting any, and if they had understood the sport they would have known that it is of no use fishing for jack without them.

But Bigings remembered what the old angler told him who sold him Isaac Walton's book, namely, that jack would take a frog when they were very hungry. But the worst of it was, he had not one, and did not know where to get one. He had beef-steak in his basket, which he thought he would try, but he had not much opinion of it, and though he told the others they were quite welcome to try some if they pleased, yet he thought they would do much better with frogs. Accordingly, off they all went to a neighbouring ditch to hunt for frogs, but they found them very scarce. Bigings, however, secured one, and a fine fellow he was, with his bright eyes and yellow stripes; but he was about five or six times too large for the purpose, for if a jack ever takes a frog, it is always a small one. But this Bigings did not know; it was a frog, and that was all he seemed to care about. The others hunted until they found another, which was quite as large as that found by Bigings; they then gave up the search, Rigings having stepped into the water up to his knee after the frog, though Stickings secured him, and therefore Rigings said he would try a piece of beef-steak. They were

not long before their hooks were baited, and into the water they threw them, though from the nature of that part of the stream any jack-fisher would have seen, that the water was no more likely to contain a jack, than they were to catch one. But plump into the water they threw them—then they pulled them out —then they threw them in again as far as ever they could sling them; then they examined them to see if any jack had been biting at them, and gave their opinions as to their appearance; and thus they went on, until the poor frogs had struggled their last, and Rigings' piece of beef-steak had changed colour and hung down from the hook, like a piece of dirty rag. As may be expected, the anglers in the punt had no little diversion in looking at them and watching their conduct. Had they been three boys, they would not have been surprised, but their age, appearance, dress, contrast and conduct, all combined to render them the objects of ridicule. Rigings, too, was spouting every now and then on the bank, and once attempted a soliloquy in rhyme for the occasion, which pleased them not a little, and ran thus :—

"Ah, me! Ah, me! unlucky wight,
To leave my spouse and bed at night;
With bosom full of hope and fear,
To come to sich a place as *this 'ere*,
To pull out jacks with much delight,
But now *I'm come*, not one will bite,
Though frogs as fat as frogs can be,
And a lovely piece of steak they see;
Oh! Lucy dear, to thee I come,
But sure thou wilt look werry glum
When in the basket thou shalt spy
No jacks or pikes for you and I!"

But the rain now began to come down, and as they had no umbrellas, and wanted their lunch, they turned into the house, leaving their lines in the water, Rigings saying, that perhaps the fish would take the bait while they were gone, for Isaac Walton said that they would sometimes bite in a shower. And they called out to the gents in the punt, and asked them if they'd be so kind as to see that no one ran away with their tackle, and they said they would. It then occurred to the barbel fishers that they should like to play them a trick, and as they had plenty of fish, they got the boatman to take three large ones in a boat, and hook one on each of their hooks, and then put them into the water again. This he did; cramming as much of the frogs and beef-steak into the mouths of the barbel

as he could, and drawing the large jack-hooks clean through their upper lips. He then dropped them into the water and rowed away.

But it was some time before they had the pleasure of seeing their astonishment, for the rain kept falling, and they kept eating, drinking and smoking—Rigings pleasing or teasing the company with his nonsense. At last the shower ceased, and out they came. Rigings, bustling along, was first at the water, and upon taking hold of his rod to see if anything had been at his bait, began pulling upon the barbel.

"By the powers of the lucifer-box," he bawled out, "I've got one!" and he pulled it at such a tremendous rate, lest it should fall off, that snap went his top joint, and had it not been that his line went through the rings on his rod, he would have lost it; but he soon pulled the barbel out with the line.

By this time Bigings and Stickings had taken up their rods, and with delightful astonishment were exclaiming, "I've got one!" and hauling them in as quickly as possible, Bigings winding his in with his winch, in sportsman-like style, saying to the

others:—"Talk about fishing, what do you call *this 'ere*, but out and out sport? Why these 'ere three fish weigh *on towards* ten pounds."

"They do, indeed," said Stickings.

"And are they jacks?" said Rigings.

"Why, as to that," said Bigings, "you see I can hardly tell. I should think they are, for they've been precious hungry: only see how the rascals have been trying to get the bait down their throats, and they have completely choked themselves, for they're as dead as herrings."

"Why, mine's as stiff as a poker," said Rigings, "and he's got every morsel of the beef-steak down his throat. Why, they must have got hungry all on a sudden."

"No, no," said Bigings, "it wasn't *that 'ere*—it was all still and quiet, and so they didn't suspect anything, and so they thought they'd have a good meal."

This conversation, and a good deal more, joined to their ignorance of the trick that had been played upon them, pleased the gents in the punt to no little extent, and as they had succeeded so well, they resolved to play them another, of some kind, if they should

again go into the house and leave their lines in the water. After a good deal of pulling, haggling, and cutting, they got the large jack-hooks out of the leathery lips of the barbel; during which operation Bigings some how or other got Stickings' hook driven ever so far into one of his fingers. Each one put his fish into his own basket, and they soon baited their hooks again, Bigings and Stickings using the frogs, and Rigings his beef-steak, for as they said, "If one fish was so voracious after them, why should there not be others of the same disposition?" And they threw them into the water, and at the recommendation of Bigings, sat watching them very quietly, expecting to see some other fish come and take them. But the ground was wet, and they were afraid of catching cold, and the soft showers began again to fall, therefore they soon went into the house again, saying one to the other, "Perhaps we shall have as good luck as we had before, when we come out again."

This gave the gents in the punt another opportunity of a piece of fun with them, for which they had been making preparation, the boatman gratifying their whims in every possible way. He had run home, and with some

old clothes, and the assistance of his wife, they had made a small figure something like a young child, everything of which it was composed being black, with some stones in the middle to sink it; that was for one hook. And from one of his neighbours he had got two very small dead pigs; they were for the other hooks. As soon as they were safely inside the house, and while the rain was falling, he went in his boat and fastened them to their hooks, and dropped them into the water, having tied a cord to the black figure, which he led round a boat-post, and from thence to the anglers in the punt.

The shower was no sooner over, than out they bustled to see if they had any more good fortune. Their rods were soon in hand, and they began to pull at them.

"I've got *summut*," said Rigings, "for I can feel it coming along."

"And so have I," said Stickings.

"I've got *summut*, too," said Bigings, "but I can't move it,"—for he had hold of the figure.

Thus they all kept pulling, for the pigs were heavy, and the boatman had carried them a good way into the stream. At last Rigings

brought his within sight, and for some seconds he stood staring at it, as though he could not believe his eyes; he then gave it another pull, and another look, and when he saw what it really was, he bawled out: "Here! here! look here! why I've got a young rhinoceros, or river-horse, or *summut er that!*" and he held it up in his hand by the line.

"By the powers, so he has!" said Bigings, "who'd *er* thought there was such things in this river?"

"Who, indeed!" said Stickings, "why it's quite a *curosity.*"

"Well, to be sure!" said Bigings, "who ever would *er dremt er* such a thing being *citched* here—take care on it, for its one of the wonders of the world!"

"But it looks very much like a pig," said Stickings.

"Yes," said he, "that's because it's young, *you see*, it hasn't got it's proper shape and make yet."

"What a pity, I couldn't *er cot* it alive," said Rigings, as he pulled the hook out of his nose, and put him into his basket. And the others resumed their pulling.

As we have said, Bigings' line was hooked

on to the black figure, and a strong cord from that was held by the gents in the punt, which as long as they held so long he would pull in vain. And it so happened that the pig which was hooked on the line of Stickings, as he drew it along got stuck quite fast in a large bunch of weeds, so that he could not move it. He pulled and pulled, and pulled again, but it was of no use, and at last his line, which was but weak, broke, and he lost float, hook and pig into the bargain. Bigings kept pulling at his, but his line was much stronger, though not so strong as the cord the boatman had tied to it.

"What a thousand *pitties* it is," said he, "that we should get so fast as *this 'ere!* I can't move it, though I can feel summut rising every now and then, and it seems to be tugging at me."

"Then it must be summut alive," said Rigings, "unless you're deceived."

"Well, now, I'll *jest* let it be still a minute," said he, "and you 'll see if it don't pull at me; and he held his rod down."

The line then gave several hard jerks, which were performed by the gents in the punt tugging at it.

"There's summut alive there, safe enough," they all said.

"Pull at it like blazes," said Rigings, "look, look, its going away," and so it was, for the gents were pulling it.

Bigings now began to pull as hard as he thought his line would bear, and the anglers in the punt pulled against him, which caused the line to slip up the boat-post, so that the black figure rose to the surface of the water. As soon as they saw it, they all bawled out, "There it is! I can see it!"

"Why, what in the name of the Virgin is it!" said Bigings—"why, its quite black!"

"Black!" said Rigings, "why its as black as the old 'un himself! Upon my conscience I really think it is him! I don't wonder you can't get him out!" And he shrugged up his shoulders and made a theatrical face, and Bigings absolutely began to look frightened, for as the anglers in the punt pulled the cord, it slipped up the post, and brought the head of the figure to the top of the water, so that it had the appearance of dancing. Stickings, who, not being used to drinking, was above three sheets in the wind, became very serious

upon the affair, and said, with his finger uplifted,—

"Hush! hush! Mr. Rigings!" and whispering to Bigings, said, "You'd better have nothing more to do with it, Mr. Bigings!"

"I'll have it out, whatever it is, by some means or other," said Bigings. "But I'll just lay my rod down a little, and perhaps it'll get loose," and so saying, he put down his rod, evidently half-frightened.

This gave the gents an opportunity of performing what they wanted, namely, to get the figure round the post, so that they might ultimately get all his line off his winch. They therefore, began pulling it, and before Bigings could get hold of his rod, succeeded in their object.

"Look, look!" said Rigings, "how it's running away with your line," and as he took up his rod, the winch spun round.

"Pull! pull!" said he; and he did pull, but all his line was gone.

"It must be some monster of the deep," said Stickings, with a tremendously long face, "or it never could serve *yer* in *sich* a way as *that 'ere;*" and Bigings looked as grave as a judge.

The boatman now went in his boat to the post, at the secret suggestion of the anglers in the punt, calling out to Bigings, "I'll see if I can get it for you!" But he only went to keep the line under his boat, so that the figure should not be seen again, and to cut the line at a favourable time, so as to give Bigings a ducking. He therefore kept the boat near the post and across the line, which the gents in the punt kept pulling, thus straining upon Biging's rod and line tremendously, he leaning over the water as far as possible for fear of his line breaking.

"Whatever shall I do?" said he; "I shall be in the river and lose my rod and line, for it's pulling with *sich* a dreadful force."

"Let me lay hold of you," said Stickings, and so saying he took hold of the tail of his long coat.

"And I'll lay hold of you," said Rigings; "if it pulls us in, we'll all go together;" and he took hold of Stickings.

"Now pull, Mr. Bigings," said he; and Bigings did pull with a vengeance!

At this moment the boatman cut the line with his knife, and plump into the water went Bigings, flat on his face; and as flat went Stick-

ings and Rigings on their backs; and there for some seconds they were all down together. Stickings was the first on his legs, and into the river he jumped, and laid hold of Bigings, and, assisted by Rigings, Bigings scrambled out.

"There's a wonderful thing!" said Bigings, as soon as he got his breath and had puffed a little. "It must be one of the imps of the bottomless pit, to serve anybody in that manner! But never mind, I've got my rod and line!" and so saying, he took off his hat and began slinging the water from it, while Stickings stamped his feet to shake the water off his legs; and Rigings, half smiling, stood staring at them with one hand lifted up in theatrical attitude.

Just at this juncture a little cur dog at some distance from them arrested their attention, for he was coughing, and yelping, and trying to get away from something that held him by the mouth, and running at the same time. They soon discovered the cause of his noise; he had seized hold of the piece of beefsteak on Rigings' hook, which was on the ground, and swallowed it, and got the hook in his jaw, and was going away, pulling the

rod after him. Rigings laid hold of the rod, and soon stopped the progress of the poor beast, who, feeling the hook pulled upon, howled most horridly.

"Well, to be sure!" said he; "here's a pretty how-do-you-do! *who'd er* thought I should *ever er cotch* a dog?" And upon this a youth came running up, to whom the dog belonged, who took hold of him, and Rigings put his rod down and went to his assistance. "He's swallowed my bait," said he.

"Yes," said the youth, "and the hook's fast in his jaw, and I don't know how I shall get it out."

Rigings looked at it and felt it, and said—"No, that'll never come out till its cut out, and so I must leave it in him;" and so saying, he pulled out his knife and cut the line close to his mouth, and back he went to his companions. They were taking their rods to pieces, for Bigings was soaked to the skin, and the others up to their knees, and therefore they said they must get dry somehow or other. Beside which, if they had not been wet, they could not have fished any more, for they had all lost their hooks,—Stickings with the pig, Bigings with the figure, and Rigings

with the dog; and like many other novices at angling, they had no more with them. Into the house they all went; Rigings singing as they went along a song of his own on the joys of angling.

They found the landlord and his wife very kind and accommodating, for the anglers who had been sporting with them had sent word that they were to render them every assistance to get their clothes dry, and they would pay all expenses. But the worst of it was, the landlord was quite a little man, and as Bigings had to pull off all his clothes and put on some of his while they were dried, he cut a very strange figure. But they all made themselves as comfortable as possible, got their clothes thoroughly dry, and were joined in the evening by the gents from the punt, who, to use Rigings's words, were three of the best fellows in the creation. Thus the company consisted of twice three jolly anglers; three who could angle, and three who could not, yet all truly friendly and jolly together. The gents were very much amused with the company of Rigings, for, with the exception of his want of education, he was, they thought, a clever little fellow. Till the hour of nine they remained,

for while they were jolly anglers, they were also punctual ones. Bigings, Stickings, and Rigings took their places in the train to London, for which the real anglers paid, and by eleven o'clock they were all at home with their loving spouses, who were all pleased with the fish; for all the barbel their friends caught they gave to them, so that their baskets were quite full; and they lived upon fish for the next three or four days.

How long it was before they went angling again we don't know; but we do know that for miles around where they spent their angling day very strange stories were told about their angling achievements, though all were very far from the truth. Some said a man was fishing and fell into the river; others, that he was pushed in; others, that he jumped in; others, that he got hold of a tremendous fish and would not let go his rod, and was by the fish pulled in.

Such were the short versions of the story. But there were others much longer, and consequently much more full of character and incident. Some Irish Catholics in the neighbourhood said that a respectable, stout old gentleman, dressed in black, who was a Roman

Catholic priest, was fishing for jack quietly enough, but two ill-looking fellows, who were Protestants, and knew him, came by and insulted him, quarrelled with him, and threw him into the river, tumbled him about and ducked him in and out like a sheep in a sheep-wash, and that three gentlemen who were angling in a punt, who were dissenters, only sat laughing at them, and said, "Give it him! —drown him—do for him!" But all on a sudden the Virgin Mary, all dressed in black, rose up out of the river and, frowning, shook her fist at them; and then a supernatural being, in the form of a large bull-dog, flew on to them, and would have killed them all, only in compassion to them she called him off. But the last version of the story, and that which got most wind, was spread abroad by the opposite party, namely, that three strange-looking fellows, who were all Roman Catholics, were all fishing together, and that his Satanic Majesty, who was as black as a coal, just popped up his head out of the water to ask them how they got on. But as there were other anglers near, who were Protestants, the followers of Romanism did not wish it to be seen that they were quite so intimate with his Majesty,

and therefore they would not speak to him, and made signs for him to cut; when he, feeling indignant at such insulting conduct, laid hold of one of their lines, and declared he would have it rod and all. A pulling match ensued, in which he pulled the Roman Catholic into the river; but the Roman Catholic got the rod and line away from him; beside which, a sturdy boatman just behind him gave him such a tremendous blow on the head with a boat-hook that it was thought he never could get over it.

STANZAS TO THE LADIES, ON ANGLING.

GENTLE ladies, to you
Just a sentence or two
We address, as wives, daughters and mothers;
And because we're aware
There are some of the fair
Who peep into the books of their brothers.

And it may, perhaps, so be,
That this book you may see,
And respecting it come to conclusion;
And we could not, we thought,
Seem to set you at nought,
By treating you all with exclusion.

Persons take different views
Of the means which you use,
To obtain healthful recreation;
And we really think you
Have just causes to rue
The false notions some take of your station.

With a great deal of care,
Like sweet flowers most rare,
You are nursed, in ten thousand of cases:
Though we plainly can see,
That if good nursing be,
It nevertheless makes pale faces.

Our mother, the first,
Was not sillily nursed,
When she roved among Eden's sweet flowers;
But in pure balmy air
Was bright, healthy, and fair,
As the roses themselves in the bowers.

But since then there has been
A few changes of scene,
And the flowers and bowers are forsaken;
And the crochet and lace,
Seen at every place,
All your energies seem to have taken.

But permit us to say,
In a true friendly way,
That we think so much knitting and sitting,
Your health and your strength
Will endanger at length,
Though you think the art very befitting.

You had much better be
In the air fresh and free,
All your charms and your graces enriching;
Than on sofas with springs,
And all other such things,
Where you sit everlastingly stitching.

Any innocent sport,
In which health can be sought,
May be follow'd by you without fearing;
And you never need care,
Though you sometimes may share
In a little sarcastical sneering.

Health and beauty and wit
Are of real benefit,
And will always be praises obtaining;
While the pettish and sad
In contempt will be had,
Though they're up in all fanciful training.

But we now must conclude,
Lest too long we intrude,
And you should with our rhyming be weary;
Though 'tis really a fact
That the scribbling act
Is perform'd with intention to cheer ye.

All we add is just this—
Do not take it amiss,
And about it get wrangling and jangling;
For, with love to you all,
We the sentence let fall,—
Let us meet you just now and then Angling!

THE END.

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.